GEORG ELSER - BERLIN GESTAPO INTERROGATION PROTOCOL

Section 1 of 5 — 19 November 1939

Rapid literal English working translation

Copy.

Berlin, 19 November 1939.

Brought forward appears:

Elser, Johann Georg,

born 4 January 1903 in Hermaringen/Wuerttemberg, Oberamt Heidenheim, unmarried, carpenter, R.D., most recently resident in Munich, Tuerkenstrasse 94/II with Lehmann, son of the timber-dealer couple Ludwig and Maria Elser, nee Mueller, resident in Koenigsbronn near Heidenheim, and states the following:

A) Personal Details

[Hermaringen (1903)]

I was born on 4 January 1903 in Hermaringen as the illegitimate son of Maria Mueller, who at that time lived with her parents, who had a wagon-maker's shop and an agricultural operation there. One year later my mother married the child's father, Ludwig Elser. Through this marriage I was legitimized. My father Ludwig Elser lived in Koenigsbronn. He had his own property there and furthermore earned his living by hauling timber and doing agricultural work.

[Koenigsbronn (1904-1925)]

After the marriage my mother lived with her husband in Koenigsbronn, and I myself also moved there with my mother. I lived in Koenigsbronn without interruption until 15 March 1925. I spent all my youth in my parents' house. I perhaps visited my maternal grandparents in Hermaringen once a year with my parents. I more often visited my paternal grandparents, who lived in Koenigsbronn, on Sundays. I was allowed to accompany my parents on such visits. At the age of four I was already visiting my grandparents in Koenigsbronn by myself.

[Siblings]

The next child of my parents, my sister Friederike, was born in 1904; I do not know the exact date. I do not know whether my parents were already married then or were shortly about to marry. My other siblings, four in all, were born later. About three years after me, that is perhaps in 1906 -- I do not know exactly -- my sister Marie was born. Then came my sister Anna, perhaps in 1908. The last so far was my brother Leonhard, who is ten years younger than I, that is, born about 1913.

In their youth, until they later went away from home, my siblings were also always at home.

[Parents]

Not every day, but often, my father came home very late. As far as I know, he was often in the tavern. My mother told us children that she was often beaten by father. I did not see it, however. Whether my father beat mother only with his hand or with a chair, a lantern, or something else, I do not know. It happened that when father came home at night we were taken out of bed for something, for example to pull off his boots. But I cannot remember, and I also do not believe, that he ever beat us at night while drunk. From my father I received only beatings, and often when I had done something. From my mother too I occasionally, though not often, received beatings. At night we always woke up when my father came home drunk. Upon entering the house he always started scolding. It was not the case that my father was drunk only on Saturdays; it also happened on weekdays, quite irregularly. As far as I know, he drank only beer and wine. Schnapps, I believe, little. I cannot remember having heard that my

father ever promised my mother he would stop drinking.

My mother never went out. Nor am I aware that she took alcohol.

I do not know whether my grandparents drank.

I can remember that as a little boy I slept in a small chamber next to my parents' bedroom. As far as my memory reaches, that is, back into early youth, I cannot remember having slept in one bed together with any of my siblings. I believe I always had my own bed alone.

My father did little in agriculture. He first hauled timber and later began his own timber business. The main burden of the agriculture lay on my mother. I and my siblings had to help very early in the stable, in the field, and in the house. As the eldest, I was also always the nursemaid for my younger siblings. In agriculture my mother was helped at times by servants. Thus I can remember that for about one year we had a farmhand and later a maid. I believe that the maid was employed by my parents for a longer time. Whether the maid was still in the house when I was already going to school, I no longer know.

[Elementary School in Koenigsbronn (1910-1917)]

At seven years of age I entered school in Koenigsbronn. I also spent my whole school period there. In the first period we had a teacher named Boehmler, whom I still remember as a solid man, that is, I do not believe that he drank or treated us unjustly. There were beatings, as far as I believe, only when it was necessary. I went through seven classes altogether. Boys and girls were always mixed. Later the teachers changed more often. From the first to the third class we had Boehmler, then a teacher Hermann came for the fourth and fifth classes. In these classes a teacher Sarkiss also taught, though his name may perhaps have been spelled differently. In the sixth and seventh classes the head teacher Kreuter taught. I was an average pupil, that is, in drawing, penmanship, and arithmetic I always had good marks; in dictation, composition, and other subjects I was less good. In religion I had satisfactory. I received no more beatings than the others, and always only when I had not properly learned my homework. Like Boehmler, the other teachers were also just, with the exception of Hermann, whom I can remember sometimes simply thrashing the whole class. I liked going to school when arithmetic, drawing, or penmanship was being taught. Otherwise I was not enthusiastic about school attendance. As far as I recall, however, I never skipped school. I was absent only when I was ill. In the fourth and fifth class I received a school notebook for good drawing, and during the same period, once for good arithmetic, ten pfennigs, as I remember, as a commendation from the teacher. As far as I still remember, in the sixth or seventh class I once had to stay after school because I had not learned my religion assignment. The punishment was assigned to me by the pastor who taught religious instruction. It was Pastor Hauser, who taught religion during my whole school period.

As far as I can remember, my parents paid little attention to the report cards I brought home from school. I cannot remember that they ever asked whether I had good or bad reports. At home, however, they both always helped me somewhat. Because I had to help at home with the agricultural work, learning was made rather difficult for me. In elementary school we had very good and also very poor schoolchildren. A class consisted on average of thirty children. The teachers made great efforts to give us the necessary knowledge. In the subjects in which my performance was weak, I probably also studied at home. I did not, however, make an effort to improve my performance through my own diligence.

My good performance in penmanship, arithmetic, and drawing is to be attributed to the great interest I already often showed as a child in these subjects.

[Agricultural Helper with the Parents in Koenigsbronn (Spring-Autumn 1917)]

In spring 1917 I left elementary school. Until autumn 1917 I then helped my father with hauling timber and my mother in agriculture. I helped load and unload the timber. In agriculture I mainly did field work; furthermore, in the stable I had to feed the cattle. I was not paid for this work, nor did I receive any pocket money from my parents. I received only my food.

Just like me, my siblings too never had to repeat a class in school. In my opinion they too were average in their performance. They also went through seven classes of the elementary school in Koenigsbronn. I

do not remember whether my siblings, like me, had special favorite subjects.

If I am asked whether at home during our youth we were treated well or badly, whether we always had enough to eat, etc., I can state that with the exception of the war period we never suffered want. The house in which we lived belonged to my parents. There were debts on this house, however, and there are also debts on the new house that my father meanwhile bought after selling the first house. The debts still amount to about 8,000 RM today. The first house in which my parents lived after their marriage had, as far as I know, been bought at that time by my grandfather for his son, my father.

During the war things at home were somewhat scarce. Despite our agriculture, at the end of a year we usually had to go rather hungry, because we had to hand everything over and were allowed to keep only a definite quantity that had to suffice for the family to live on for a year. During the first part of the war, how long I no longer know, my father, with our horses and wagon, was called up to Ulm for service at fortress-construction work. When this work was finished, he came home and during the whole war was not used any further in the army or otherwise. Since returning from military service, my father has not left Koenigsbronn. As I remember it, he also did not travel.

My mother was away from Koenigsbronn only once; this may have been in 1910, for one week. She had left Koenigsbronn after she had again been beaten by my father. I no longer remember the occasion for this. During that week she stayed with us children in Hermaringen with her parents. A sister of my father induced my mother to return to Koenigsbronn. Otherwise I do not know that my mother left Koenigsbronn, apart from visits she made to her parents.

[Sister Friederike]

My sister Friederike married the installer Willi Kraft from Schnaitheim near Heidenheim around 1926. As far as I know, Kraft is today a welder.

Before her marriage Friederike worked once, perhaps also twice, in the cigar factory there in Koenigsbronn. In addition she was a maid away from home. Whether this was before or after her work in the factory, and where she was employed everywhere as a maid, I do not know exactly, because I left the parental house in 1925. I can only remember that she was once in Reutlingen. Today Friederike lives with her husband and, I believe, three children in Schnaitheim, where they moved some time after their marriage, after they had first lived in Koenigsbronn. Whether my sister lives happily and whether the children are healthy, I do not know. When I visited her the last time, about two or three years ago, I noticed nothing special. Kraft works in a large factory and is well paid. With my brother-in-law Kraft, whom I had already known before his marriage to my sister, I originally stood on good terms. Only some years after their marriage did a strained relationship arise with my sister and thereby also with her husband. A cupboard, which we had bought together in the parental house, that is, my sister Friederike and I, was the cause of a small quarrel. Since then I have not visited Friederike and her husband. There are no other causes for the present poor relationship.

[Sister Maria]

After leaving school my sister Maria was at first employed at home, that is, I suppose this more than I can remember it. But I know that she was away from home for a longer time and worked as a maidservant and possibly also in agriculture, but probably not in a factory. It may be that it was Maria who once worked in a factory in Herbrechtingen. But it may also be that I am confusing her in this respect with my other sister Friederike. About two or three years ago my sister Maria married in Stuttgart. Her husband, Karl Hirth, is employed there in a larger hotel business as a butcher, namely in the "Wuerttemberger Hof." Maria lives in Stuttgart with her husband and one child at Lerchenstrasse 52, in an apartment with two rooms and a kitchen. What Hirth earns, I do not know. My sister still goes to the factory, I believe to Bleyle. The apartment is very clean and I believe that the two live happily together. With Hirth, whom I had already come to know before the marriage on the occasion of his visits to my parental house, I always stood on good terms. Since she has been married I have visited my sister three, or at most four, times. The first time was when they brought the household furnishings for their apartment from home to Stuttgart by car, and I accompanied them. At that time I stayed two or three days at Lerchenstrasse 52. I also slept there, either with them in the marriage beds or on the divan. Exactly I no longer know today. On two visits, however, I definitely slept with them in the

marriage beds. Maria's child was already seven years old at the time of the marriage. Hirth is the real father of the child Franz. At that time, during my first stay, I helped my sister arrange the apartment and set up the furniture. Furthermore, I recolored the standing clock after the color of this clock did not match the furniture. On the standing clock I also repaired a gong rod that had broken during the transport to Stuttgart. I had to have this rod welded to the iron plate. On the clock I also had to install the movement, fasten the glass rods, and set the clock. I had the welding work done by a locksmith or tinsmith near my sister's apartment; I no longer remember the locksmith's name. Since then I have not gone to this locksmith again. After I had carried out this work in the apartment and arranged the apartment, I left my sister's apartment and returned to Koenigsbronn. In Stuttgart itself I did not stay any longer. There I merely visited an inn, likewise near my sister's apartment, to take lunch. I did not go into any other restaurants in Stuttgart. At that time I did not come into contact with any further people in Stuttgart. It may even be that the mentioned visit to the inn with my sister took place only during a later visit in Stuttgart. With the mentioned locksmith I spoke only about the work he had to do. I did not speak with the locksmith about any other matters, tricks of the trade, or such things.

About one year later, it was in spring or autumn, I cannot give the exact time, I visited my sister in Stuttgart in the same apartment without any particular occasion. At that time I traveled by train from Koenigsbronn to Stuttgart. As far as I remember, I had not informed my sister beforehand of this visit. In any case, I was not in correspondence with her at all. I must add that on a Saturday or Sunday I first traveled from Koenigsbronn to Esslingen, visited there my former landlady from Koenigsbronn, Else Haerlen, with whom I had a relationship, spent one night with this woman in an inn near the station -- the name is no longer remembered -- diagonally right from the station exit; I would perhaps find it again; and on the next day continued by train to Stuttgart. The landlady drew my attention at that time to the mentioned inn; whether she knew it by name I do not know. I now recall that it was a Monday when I visited my sister in Stuttgart. I arrived in Stuttgart around eight o'clock, went on foot to my sister's apartment at Lerchenstrasse no. 52, where I found my brother-in-law and my nephew. My sister was not at home at that time; according to my brother-in-law she was already in the factory at Bleyle. I spent this day together with my brother-in-law. I do not believe that we left the apartment before late afternoon. It may, however, have been during this visit that after lunch Hirth and I took a walk together in a small park with a stream. Quite definitely I now know, however, that on that day after the end of work I picked up my sister Maria at the factory, Bleyle. On the occasion of this visit I did not sleep in my sister's apartment, nor in Stuttgart at all. I returned the same evening by train to Koenigsbronn. I concealed from my brother-in-law and my sister the true reason for my visit to Stuttgart, namely the meeting with Haerlen in Esslingen. I do not believe that they know anything at all about my relations with this woman, from me at least not. I can definitely remember that on that day in Stuttgart I met no strangers, that is, no one besides my sister, brother-in-law, and nephew. No other persons came into my brother-in-law's apartment either. What we spoke about, I no longer remember today; in any case it will have concerned only purely family, insignificant matters. As far as I still know after reflection, that evening I went on foot and alone to the station to take the train to Koenigsbronn. I had no luggage with me. This was my second visit to my sister.

[Stuttgart (6-7 November 1939)]

For my third visit, which then took place at the beginning of November 1939, I announced myself to my sister from Munich about the end of October by a letter. This letter had, as far as I can still remember, approximately the following wording:

"Dear sister, Karl, and Franzle! How are you? I will probably pay you a visit at the beginning of November. Please write to me whether you can use the following objects: suits, shirts, socks, pullovers, camera, two pairs of shoes, my carpenter's tools, umbrella, three hats. Please write to me immediately whether you have use for them. Heartfelt greetings, Georg."

After a few days I received from my sister, under the Munich address I had given, Georg Elser c/o Lehmann, Munich, Tuerkenstrasse 94, the reply letter with approximately the following content:

"I am astonished by your letter. I do not understand this letter. I am glad that you are visiting me. Things like that can be needed nowadays."

I remember afterwards that the question was also included: "Are you going to the military or abroad?"

Without sending my sister any further message, I then traveled on Monday, 6 November 1939, by train with all my remaining luggage, insofar as I had not already sent it ahead, to Stuttgart, where I arrived in the afternoon. I was not collected at the station, since my relatives did not know when I was coming. With my hand suitcase -- the other luggage had been checked as passenger luggage -- I went to the "Wuerttemberger Hof" across the station square, in order to visit my brother-in-law, who was employed there. A hotel employee told me that his place of work was a few houses farther on in the same street. As stated, I found my brother-in-law occupied with auxiliary work, since apparently as a butcher he had little to do at that moment. My brother-in-law accompanied me back to the station, helped me collect my luggage, summoned a porter with a three-wheeled cart, and then went back to his workplace. I rode with the porter on his cart to Lerchenstrasse 52, where I found my sister at home.

I admit that both my sister and my brother-in-law asked me during this short stay in Stuttgart and during our being together what I intended to do. I explained that I had to go "over the fence" -- the border. The further question why I always answered only by saying: "I must." After this short answer of mine, neither my sister nor my brother-in-law asked further questions about the reason for my intended journey abroad. It is possible that I further explained: "It cannot be changed." I neither communicated nor hinted to my sister or my brother-in-law the true reason for my intended flight. They did not put any further questions of this sort to me. They were without doubt clear in their minds that I would not disclose the reason for my intended trip abroad.

The large wooden suitcase I carried with my brother-in-law, who had come home in the meantime, into the kitchen of my sister's apartment. The travel suitcase and a package with pictures had already been brought earlier by my sister and me into the apartment, and the small wooden box and a package with dirty laundry by both of us into the cellar. In the small wooden box there were screws, nails, and tools with which I had worked and tinkered at home. In the large wooden box there were my suits, clean underwear, two half-finished clock cases that I wanted to sell after finishing them, and furthermore a cardboard box containing three or four clockworks. These works were intended for table clocks. Two works were defective because of broken springs. These works came either from the firm Rothmund, clock-case manufacture, Meersburg, or from the firm Riesterer, clock wholesaler in Villingen. As far as I know, I received them in January 1932 from the firm Rothmund as compensation for work performed, after the due wage of 176 RM could not be paid owing to bankruptcy or composition. At the firm Rothmund I was employed at that time as a carpenter. I opened the suitcase, the packages, and the boxes in the presence of my sister and my brother-in-law. The objects were taken into safekeeping by both of them. The double bottom in the large wooden box I showed to my sister. I merely unscrewed and screwed this double bottom back down again, without giving any further explanation. Whether my sister asked a question about this I no longer remember. I also cannot state with certainty whether I showed this double bottom to my brother-in-law. All the objects in the suitcases, boxes, and packages I gave to my sister and my brother-in-law. I did not leave my sister's apartment that evening. In the apartment no visitor was received that evening. My sister merely spoke in the stairwell with a man unknown to me when she was going from the cellar back to the apartment. At that time I was walking ahead of my sister and passed this male person. Judging by the voice, this man may have been the husband of my sister Anna, who is married in Zuffenhausen. The family name does not come to me now; the first name is Fritz. The content of the conversation between the two is not known to me, since I did not understand the conversation. Upon my later question, my sister explained to me that this man was my brother-in-law Fritz. I then inquired whether they had spoken about me, which my sister also confirmed. He had asked her whether I was her brother. No more was said about this man. I am not well disposed toward this Fritz, because he sides with his wife, with whom I am at enmity because of a quarrel with my mother.

In the evening I sat together with my sister, my brother-in-law, and the little nephew in the living room. We first talked about family matters. For example, we spoke about how our father was doing. In that connection I said that I intended to travel once more to Koenigsbronn in order to see my father once more. I also wanted to go to Schnaitheim, to greet the Schmauder family and to see their daughter Maria once more. I had lived with the Schmauder family before I went to Munich, and with the daughter Maria I had a relationship. I informed my sister and my brother-in-law of this. That evening I was also

again asked whether it really had to be that I was going abroad. I again said: "It cannot be changed." To the question, "Where?" I answered that I wanted to go to Switzerland. I said no more that evening either. I likewise said nothing more specific about the reasons. As far as I can remember, my sister also did not expressly ask me whether I wanted to go abroad because of my alimony payments. I assumed, however, that my sister would suspect this. I can no longer remember further details of the conversation that day. I also do not believe that more was said. I went to bed before my relatives. I also got up after them. I slept that night in one of the marriage beds. My sister and my brother-in-law lay beside me, that is, I did not see it, but I suppose this because I did not see that a bed had been made up on the divan. When I got up the next morning, my brother-in-law had already gone to work. He had, however, said goodbye to me at the bed before he went. My sister did not go to the factory on that day. I do not know whether she had reported sick or whether she no longer goes to the business at all. I do not believe that I asked my sister why she was staying at home. I had breakfast together with my sister and also took lunch at home with her. I no longer know whether my nephew Franz also ate with us. At about 4 p.m. on that day, 7 November 1939, I traveled by train to Munich. I rode alone by tram to the station. Before departure I visited my brother-in-law once more at his workplace. I took only a very brief leave. Apart from general wishes such as "Stay healthy" and "Write sometime," nothing was said.

I had formed the decision to go to Munich a few days earlier. But as I have already said, I first wanted to go to Koenigsbronn and Schnaitheim. Since on that day, however, I had only got up between eight and nine o'clock, I would no longer have reached Munich if I had first traveled to Koenigsbronn and Schnaitheim. I did not establish this from the timetable, but simply estimated it. I no longer know exactly whether it was already on the previous evening or on the morning of that day when I told my sister that I had to go to Munich once more.

Note:

Despite energetic confrontations and references to the implausibility of his assertions, E. remains with the assertion that he no longer knows whether his sister said anything about this change of program, or what she might have said.

From that day until today I saw my sister and my brother-in-law for the last time.

So much for my relations with my sister Maria and my brother-in-law Karl Hirth.

[Sister Anna]

My sister Anna is likewise married, namely to a locksmith whose first name is Fritz; the family name does not come to me at the moment, and she lives in Zuffenhausen. I am not in steady contact with her or with her husband. The last time I saw Anna was in autumn of last year, when she visited my parents in Koenigsbronn.

[Brother Leonhard]

My brother Leonhard lives in Koenigsbronn in the parental house, for which he is registered as co-owner. By trade he is a carpenter journeyman and was most recently employed at the Koenigsbronn ironworks. He is married and has one child. Until this spring I was on good terms with him. Since then poorly, because in my opinion he and his wife have forced themselves into the house.

Note:

After conclusion of the interrogation concerning family relations, the interrogation is continued chronologically, beginning with the apprenticeship.

Elser states:

[Friends Eugen Rau, Hans Scheerer]

During the period between leaving school and beginning the apprenticeship I continued closer relations with two of my schoolmates. These are:

Eugen Rau,

whom I have also seen more often in the meantime, but with whom I no longer have any especially close friendship, and

Hans Scheerer,

who later emigrated to America and has been missing for many years.

[Metal-Turner Apprenticeship at the Ironworks in Koenigsbronn (1917-March 1919)]

During my work in my father's business and in domestic agriculture I formed the decision to become a metal turner. My father, however, wanted me to remain at home, that is, to support him in his trade and in agriculture. When I explained to him that I wanted to enter apprenticeship as a metal turner, he did not beat me and did not make a great row either, but tried to dissuade me from it. Since my mother supported me, however, I carried through my will.

I got the idea of becoming a metal turner because my already-mentioned schoolmate Eugen Rau entered apprenticeship in a metal-turning shop immediately after leaving school. It was not that he described this trade to me as especially fine or brought home workpieces he had made; rather, the mere fact that my friend was a metal turner moved me, without my knowing exactly why, to take up this trade too. My father's trade and agriculture had always appealed to me. In agriculture I worked less from joy in this work than only from the will to help my mother. Handling horses did not suit me very much, and moreover I had lived through the deaths of various horses, which also spoiled my desire for the hauling trade.

Every kind of tinkering activity suited me more. Already as a boy I had done fretwork and other small handicrafts. At that time I did not yet have professional guidance in my tinkering from an older craftsman, such as the village blacksmith or locksmith.

After leaving school I had the wish to become a metal turner. After I had prevailed at home, I had to, as far as I can remember, look for my apprenticeship myself. At the Koenigsbronn ironworks I had the opportunity in autumn 1917 to be taken on as a metal-turner apprentice. My friend Rau worked in the same plant. In the mentioned plant I worked in the metal-turning shop under the masters Britsch and Merk. In this department of the ironworks, the metal-turning shop, altogether about thirty to forty workers, plus four or five apprentices, were employed in two shifts. After some time I observed, that is, first my father observed, that the work in this workshop did not agree with my health. I believe I remember definitely that it was first my father who established that I could not stand it. During this period I had been ill several times. What exactly was wrong with me I no longer know. In any case I had fever and headaches. I went to the doctor several times. As far as I know, at that time I personally went to the factory office and explained there that I wanted to stop this work because I could not tolerate it. I believe I still had to work for another eight or fourteen days and then left. Altogether, therefore, I was employed there from autumn 1917 until spring 1919, the beginning of March.

How much I earned weekly during my apprenticeship I no longer know. In any case in the first year somewhat less than in the remainder of my interrupted apprenticeship.

I remember that I had to deliver the whole payday, that is, everything I received in money, at home. I was allowed to keep nothing and also received no pocket money from my father on Sundays. Only when I was allowed to buy something did I receive the full amount of the price each time. During this apprenticeship I gained no new friends. I continued to associate with Rau and Scheerer. Scheerer was then a locksmith's apprentice at the firm Voith in Heidenheim.

In the first quarter-year of my employment at the ironworks I had to perform auxiliary work for the older turners, such as carrying tools to be set up, fetching material, and so on. I was not yet allowed to undertake any work independently. After the first quarter-year I came to a small lathe, at which I was allowed to work independently under the master's supervision. I had to cut threads, turn bolts, grind anvils, and perform other smaller turning jobs. I performed these works as part of the overall production and not as actual apprentice work. After some time I came to a larger lathe because mine was of too light a construction, especially for anvil grinding.

In the subsequent period I then did somewhat more difficult turning work. I did not carry out any assembly activity. If I am expressly asked whether perhaps on the occasion of this apprenticeship I had set up a small collection of tools at home, I must deny this. All tools that I partly also acquired already at that time I acquired by purchase.

During this apprenticeship as a metal turner I naturally continued tinkering at home too. Among other things, at that time I built a rabbit hutch and occupied myself with making a small gasoline engine myself, for which I had bought an instruction booklet.

At the same time as entering apprenticeship at the Koenigsbronn ironworks, where apart from my school friend Rau, who, as I have already said, was an apprentice there, I had no special acquaintances, I also entered the trade school in Heidenheim. As far as I still know, there was instruction one day a week. In the class for metal turners there were about thirty pupils. The instruction was given by the trade-school teacher Edel. I counted among the better pupils in this class. Of the three commendations distributed after the first year, I received one.

The Koenigsbronn ironworks was the only plant in the locality in which I could receive training as a metal turner.

[Carpenter Apprenticeship with Robert Sapper in Koenigsbronn (March 1919-Spring 1922)]

After, as already stated, I did not feel able for health reasons to carry on the trade of a metal turner, I formed the decision to learn the carpenter's trade. Near my parents' dwelling the master carpenters Robert Sapper and Fritz Weber had carpenter workshops, where during my time as a metal-turner apprentice, on my parents' order, I repeatedly had to fetch sawdust and wood shavings. Sawdust and the short plane shavings were used in the parental property as litter in the stable, and the long plane shavings for lighting fires. When fetching the sawdust and shavings -- this was always after the end of work -- I always watched the two masters at their work in the workshops, and thereby my interest in the carpenter's trade was awakened. My parents agreed that on 15 March 1919 I entered Robert Sapper's shop as a carpenter apprentice. Robert Sapper also had a journeyman employed; this was a certain Staeudle from Schnaitheim. Furthermore, Otto Britsch from Koenigsbronn was working there as an apprentice. Later a certain Hermann Bauder also entered as an apprentice. In the course of time I became friends with Bauder. He is a distant relative of mine. Since Sapper was known as a capable master carpenter, I entered apprenticeship with him and not with Weber. There were no further reasons for this. On 15 March 1922 the apprenticeship with Sapper was ended. In the first period of my apprenticeship I had to make simple boxes, stools, benches, and the like, which required no special skills. I had to cut the wood, plane it, and assemble it. I took great pleasure and great interest in this work. The work became increasingly difficult, and at the end of my apprenticeship I was able to make large and heavy pieces of furniture myself. Sapper also operated as a building carpenter, but I was employed there only incidentally. There I learned to lay strip flooring, set door frames, hang doors, set window frames, fit shutters, and apply paneling to stairwells. These works did not appeal to me much, since they were connected with so much dirt and filth. I had special interest only in furniture joinery. In the first year of apprenticeship I received one RM weekly, in the second year two RM, and in the third year three or four RM weekly. In part I used this money for buying clothing and for buying carpenter's and locksmith's tools, such as iron drills, iron files, carpenter's planes, etc. I used these tools only at home, in order to be able to carry out the necessary repairs there myself. Furthermore, at home I also made the objects that were needed there, for example converting a cellar into a living room.

[Carpenter Journeyman with Robert Sapper in Koenigsbronn (Spring 1922-January 1923)]

In spring 1922 I passed the journeyman's examination at the trade school in Heidenheim as the best. My parents and my master were very satisfied with this success. Subsequently I was still employed until January 1923 with Sapper as a carpenter journeyman, where I worked for the most part in furniture joinery. As a journeyman too, I worked only now and then in building carpentry. I no longer remember the weekly wage. I likewise used the weekly wage for buying clothing, tools, and carpenter's material that I needed at home; furthermore, I always handed over a certain amount to my mother, who needed

it for housekeeping. I had not become friends with any further trade comrades besides the mentioned Bauder up to this time either. Bauder, like me, was likewise mainly active in furniture joinery; he passed the journeyman's examination one year later; furthermore, like me, he was a tinkerer. He always tried to build electric and gasoline motors at home. What successes he achieved in this is not known to me.

[Carpenter Journeyman at the Paul Rieder Furniture Factory in Aalen (January 1923-Autumn 1923)]

Around December 1922 I gave notice to master carpenter Sapper, after I had prospects of entering the Riederer furniture factory in Aalen as a carpenter journeyman. At that time Sapper did not accept this notice, since he urgently needed me. After Sapper likewise did not accept a renewed notice at the beginning of 1923 for the same reason, I stayed away from Sapper at the end of January 1923 or beginning of February and entered the firm Riederer in Aalen as a carpenter journeyman. The reason for the change of workplace lay in the fact that the earnings at the firm Riederer were considerably higher than with Sapper. I was employed at the firm Riederer until autumn 1923. There I mainly had to make kitchen installations and bedroom furniture. During this time I kept my dwelling in Koenigsbronn with my parents. I always traveled to the workplace and back by train. I did not make any friendships with trade comrades at the firm Riederer. In my free time I continued at home to carry out the repairs that arose. As I remember it, I no longer had time for tinkering. I no longer got together with Bauder at that time. I only still had contact with my old school friend Rau.

[Agricultural Helper with the Parents (Autumn 1923-Summer 1924)]

After in autumn 1923, owing to inflation, money had no value any longer, I voluntarily and properly gave notice at the firm Riederer and took part in the domestic work. As before, I helped my mother with field work and assisted my father, who in the meantime was operating the timber business, with forest work, for example cleaning poles, sawing, cutting out, and the like. I received neither pay nor pocket money from my mother or my father. I had lodging and food at home. At that time I spent my free time with my friend Rau, who had a gramophone at home and taught me to dance. During this time I did little tinkering work.

[Carpenter Journeyman with Matthias Mueller in Heidenheim (Summer 1924-January/February 1925)]

Until summer 1924 I was active at home in the stated manner. Around this time I asked the firm Matthias Mueller, furniture joinery in Heidenheim, for work. Two or three days later I was taken on there as a carpenter journeyman. This firm Mueller was known to me from my school period, the trade school. This firm had caught my attention and remained in my memory because of its large warehouse. For this reason I also applied for work there. The owner of the firm was the master carpenter Matthias Mueller. Four or five journeymen and one or two apprentices were also employed there. They made mostly apartment furnishings. I mainly had to make kitchen cabinets and wardrobes. No workers were assigned to me for this. I worked independently. At that time I kept my residence with my parents in Koenigsbronn. As far as I remember, I constantly traveled by train to my workplace and back again to Koenigsbronn. I did not make any friendships during my work at the firm Mueller. The owner of the firm was always satisfied with my work. He had no objections. In January or February 1925 I gave notice there again. I had a desire to go away, to improve myself further in my trade. Mueller was reluctant to let me go; the reason is not known to me.

[Agricultural Helper with the Parents (February 1925)]

After leaving the firm Mueller-Heidenheim I was at home again for some time and worked there as usual, that is, I helped wherever it was necessary. I already had a position away from home in prospect, namely I was to begin a position on 15 March 1925 with master carpenter Wachter in Bernried near Tettnang.

[Bernried and Manzell/Kluftern (March-August 1925)]

[Carpenter Journeyman with Wachter in Bernried (March-May 1925)]

I came to this workplace through a carpenter named Karl (?) Fischer from Oberkochen, a village about six kilometers from my home. I had met this Fischer during occasional walks that I then took with my friend Rau, in the inn "Zum Hirsch" in Oberkochen. At Fischer's invitation, after I had told him that I wanted to go away, I wrote to the master carpenter Wachter, by whom Fischer had once been employed, asking for work. I received a written acceptance for 15 March 1925. On that date I traveled by train to Tettnang, walked about two hours to Bernried, and took up my position there. I was the only journeyman there and worked together with the master alone. I lived in the master's house in a chamber under the roof. I was employed there too with furniture making. The work there did not really suit me because Wachter had no machines in his workshop except a self-made circular saw, and for example all planing work had to be done by hand. In addition, I did not like the village. There are only a few scattered houses, so that I felt much too lonely. I therefore stayed there only about six weeks and left again in May 1925 after giving notice on my part. Master Wachter was reluctant to let me go, but I had no quarrel with him because of this. During my short stay in Bernried I formed no friendships or closer acquaintances. As wages there I received, besides free board and lodging, perhaps eight to twelve RM a week.

[Carpenter Journeyman with Dornier in Manzell (May-August 1925)]

When I left the position, I did not yet have any work in prospect. I wandered via Langenargen along Lake Constance to Friedrichshafen and Manzell. From Bernried to Friedrichshafen I was on foot for about one week. I stayed overnight in inns and asked repeatedly along the way for work, without success. On this wandering I was always alone. I neither begged nor peddled, then or later. I paid the inn bills from my savings. Through the employment office in Friedrichshafen, where I also inquired, I learned that the Dornier Works in Manzell was looking for a trained carpenter. I accepted the position and was employed in propeller construction. I cannot remember the name of the master of the department exactly; I believe his name was Wapra or something similar. In this department about fifteen to twenty people were employed. Since, owing to the tourist season, I could not get a room in the immediate vicinity of the plant, I rented in Kluftern, a village on the railway line between Manzell and Markdorf. Every day I traveled back and forth by rail between Manzell and Kluftern. In Kluftern I lived in an inn whose name I can no longer remember. In this position, through piecework and much overtime, I earned quite well, in any case more than ever before. In the workshop I came to know somewhat more closely a co-worker named Leo (?) Dannecker. Dannecker lived in Markdorf or in a place near Markdorf. He was, like me, a trained carpenter and somewhat younger than I. But I did not take my Sunday walks together with him, but always alone, either along the lake or in the city of Friedrichshafen. My acquaintance with Dannecker was not political and not especially friendly. We were almost only together in the plant. In itself I liked things very much at Dornier. But it was Dannecker who persuaded me to change positions. Dannecker played clarinet in his free time and absolutely wanted to go to Konstanz in order to be able to join a music association there. Finally he persuaded me to write together with him to the clock factory in Konstanz for work. We received acceptance, gave notice at our previous employment, and one day traveled together by ship from Friedrichshafen to Konstanz. I believe this was my first boat trip on Lake Constance.

[Konstanz (August 1925-May 1932)]

[Carpenter Journeyman at the Clock Factory in Konstanz (August 1925-1929)]

On a day in August 1925 that I no longer remember exactly, I entered the Konstanz clock factory together with Dannecker as a carpenter. This firm sells finished clocks, but itself manufactures only the cases and installs the acquired clockworks. In this firm, with several interruptions of partly some weeks, partly some months, and with half a year of work in Switzerland, I was employed until spring 1930. During this period I left the firm whenever for some reason no more work was available. Once the owner had died; another time the firm went bankrupt; another time a fire had broken out. In this firm I was always employed only in the carpentry shop, where the wooden cases for larger clocks were made.

As far as I remember, when I entered it the firm originally called itself "Metzner," later "Schuckmann & Co.," and later it was renamed "Oberrheinische Uhrenindustrie." The firm changed owners several times. The owner of the firm was originally a Metzner, whom I did not know more closely, then a

Schuckmann, later a Fuchs, and finally a Hahn. I cannot make more detailed statements today, especially about the timing. The first time I gave up my workplace at this firm, in 1926 or 1927, was after it had then gone bankrupt. The owner of the firm was still Metzner at that time. All work was stopped then. I was unemployed for about half a year and during that time repeatedly looked around unsuccessfully for work at various firms in Konstanz. I can no longer name the individual firms today. I kept my lodging in Konstanz; I did not leave Konstanz. When in 1928 the new owner of the firm, named Fuchs, died, work at the firm was again stopped, and I was again without work for about half a year. During this time too, despite repeated inquiries in Konstanz, I could not find work. At that time I lived from unemployment support and from my savings. I received no support of any kind from strangers. Nor did I approach strangers in this respect.

[Carpenter Journeyman with Schoenholzer in Bottighofen/Switzerland (1929)]

Around the year 1929 work at this firm was again stopped and all workers dismissed. As far as I remember, the dismissal was due to a fire at the firm. I thereupon went to Bottighofen, Switzerland, which lies about eight to ten kilometers south of Konstanz. There I found work at the Schoenholzer carpentry shop. I went there because I had again looked around in vain for work in Konstanz. Who referred me to the firm Schoenholzer in Bottighofen is no longer remembered by me today; it is possible that I became aware of it through a newspaper advertisement. I was employed at this firm for about half a year as a carpenter journeyman. The owner of this firm is also named Schoenholzer; I do not remember the first name. There I had to make apartment furnishings. There I had an hourly wage of 1 franc 30, which was 1.04 RM. At this firm only the owner and his son were otherwise active. I also kept my lodging in Konstanz during this time. Every day I rode my bicycle early in the morning to Bottighofen and in the evening back to Konstanz. I cannot give any special reason why I did not take a lodging in Bottighofen. I had no interest in living in Switzerland. I came to know no further persons in Bottighofen except the Schoenholzer family.

[Carpenter Journeyman with Rothmund in Meersburg (End of 1929/Beginning of 1930-Spring 1932)]

At the end of 1929 or beginning of 1930 a woman in Konstanz, whose name at the moment I do not remember, told me that a former partner of the clock factory in Konstanz named Rothmund was making clock cases in Meersburg and that he was looking for workers. The woman had formerly likewise been employed in the clock factory in Konstanz and lived near this factory. On this report I went to this Rothmund in Meersburg, where I asked for work. After a few days I was able to begin work there. As far as I recall, I properly gave notice at Schoenholzer in Bottighofen.

In Konstanz I first lived at Inselgasse 15 with Braster, and subsequently in succession in the following further lodgings: Gebhardstrasse no. ?, with Frau Stadel or Stadler, then Fuerstenbergstrasse 1 with Niedermann.

[Mathilde Niedermann, Hilda Lang]

With my former acquaintance Leo Dannecker I soon lost closer contact during my Konstanz period. There I made the acquaintance, one after another, of several young girls, so that my time was filled. I can remember by name some with whom I went around for a longer time. They were named: Mathilde Niedermann, then resident at Gebhardstrasse no. ? in Konstanz; Hilda Lang, Hussenstrasse (?) in Konstanz. Niedermann was a waitress and Lang a milliner. I cannot remember any further names of female acquaintances during this period. I gained no new friends.

The fire in the clock factory, which I already mentioned briefly, was recorded by the police at the time. Later I once heard that the former owner Hahn was supposed to have set the fire himself. Whether he was convicted, I do not know.

The bicycle that I used for my rides between Konstanz and Bottighofen I bought brand-new in Konstanz around the year 1927. It cost about 140 RM. I had saved the money for it. I owned this bicycle until 1938, when in November or December of last year I sold it to a work colleague in Heidenheim for perhaps 16 RM. Perhaps this sale also took place in January 1939.

Broken off at 9:30 p.m.

Signed: Kappler, Schmidt, Seibold. Criminal Commissioners.

GEORG ELSER - BERLIN GESTAPO INTERROGATION PROTOCOL

Section 2 of 5 — 20 November 1939

Rapid literal English working translation

Continuation of the interrogation on 20 November 1939 at 10:00 a.m.

As I stated yesterday, at the beginning of 1930 I entered the clock-manufacturing shop in Meersburg as a journeyman cabinetmaker. The owner of this manufacturing shop was Rothmund, the former partner of the Upper Rhine Clock Manufacturing Company in Constance. Cases for table clocks were made there, and also cases for kitchen clocks. The works for these clocks were obtained from outside; from where, I do not know. Rothmund carried out the installation of the clockworks into the cases with his brother. The manufacturing operation was housed in the workshop of the glazier Wilhelm Matthes in Meersburg. Besides Rothmund and his brother, there were still five workers and one woman employed there. Of these, two workers had previously been employed in the clock manufacturing shop in Constance. The names of the workers and of the woman are no longer in my memory. At Rothmund's I had to cut out the boards for making the cases and to assemble the clock cases. Another man worked together with me; he had formerly been a glazier's journeyman and, I believe, had been employed by Matthes. The name of this man is also no longer known to me today. I was paid according to the tariff.

Until the spring of 1932 I was still living in Constance, last at Fuerstenbergstrasse 1 with Niedermann. Up to that time I traveled daily in the early morning by ferry from Constance to Meersburg and in the evening, after the end of work, back again from Meersburg to Constance. In the clock manufacturing shop in Meersburg work was from 7:00 to 12:00 and from 13:00 until about 18:00. I took my midday meal here and there in the workshop and here and there in the tavern "Hirsch" in Meersburg. Of the workers employed by Rothmund, the woman and also another workmate likewise lived in Constance; they also used the ferry to and from Constance. On these crossings I was for the most part in the company of these two.

At that time I had maintained a relationship with Hilda Lang, resident in Constance, Hussenstrasse, house number unknown. I spent most of my free time with Lang. For her I also made a sewing table and various small pieces of furniture in my free time. At that time I had no other acquaintances with females. Nor at that time did I form any friendships with workmates or other persons. At that time I was always alone with Lang.

In the spring of 1932 I was dismissed by Rothmund together with four other workmates. As far as I remember, Rothmund at that time initiated composition proceedings. The woman employed by him and the journeyman cabinetmaker from Constance had already been dismissed some time before, for a reason unknown to me. I assume that this was due to poor business. I am not informed about Rothmund's later activity.

[Journeyman cabinetmaker with Zimmermann in Meersburg (spring-May 1932)]

Soon afterward I looked around for work in Meersburg and finally, I can no longer state the exact time, found work with a carpenter in Meersburg, name no longer in my memory, whose workshop was located beside the workshop of the glazier Matthes. I was employed by this carpenter for an estimated four to five weeks. There I mainly had to make door frames and doors for new residential buildings. I carried out these jobs independently. The pay was likewise according to the tariff. I was the only worker there. After this carpenter no longer received any orders and had no more work for me, I was dismissed after four or five weeks. This was approximately in May 1932.

[Meersburg (May-August 1932)]

After I was unable to find a new workplace despite my efforts, I gave up my room in Constance and moved to Meersburg, where I repaired furniture and made small new items for people in exchange for lodging and board.

[Occasional work as a cabinetmaker (May-August 1932)]

In May, June, or July 1932 I lived with the Dreher family in Kunkelgasse, house number no longer known. At that time I worked for the widow Becker, who lived on the property of the glazier Matthes. I had to repair a secretary desk there and make a table. I cannot at present remember any further work for Mrs. Becker. From Mrs. Becker, who was a good acquaintance of the Dreher family, I received my meals at that time. I did not have to pay anything to spend the night at Dreher's. Afterward I had to repair cabinets for a Heidorfer family, who were likewise good acquaintances of the Dreher family; I no longer remember the apartment. The apartment, that is, the room, I still had at Dreher's at that time; I was fed by the Heidorfer family then. It occurs to me that I also had to repair a cabinet for an Obser family at the same time. At the Dreher family too I had to set up an old cabinet. At the end of July or the beginning of August 1932 I had taken a sleeping place with Schnell, where I had to repair their bedroom. I gave up the room at Dreher's only because Mrs. Schnell made a sleeping place available to me at her place. There I had a small room of my own. This work for Mrs. Schnell lasted until about the middle of August 1932. As already mentioned, from all these people I was mainly granted only board and lodging free of charge. For these occasional jobs I received only a small financial compensation, the amount of which I cannot state. I did not come into contact with any further persons then. At that time too I spent my free time mainly with Lang, whom I visited a few times in Constance. Lang also visited me here and there in Meersburg. I no longer had any connection with Dannecker.

[Koenigsbronn (August 1932-May 1939)]

In mid-August 1932 I then went home from Meersburg. I had no longer bothered about another workplace in Meersburg. I had already, I believe, made the decision in May 1932 to go to my parents, after my mother had informed me in writing at that time that my father was drinking more and more and was selling one field after another in order to pay his debts, which arose from the timber business and from the constant drinking bouts. My mother expected an improvement in my father's behavior from my coming. At that time I traveled by rail to Koenigsbronn to my parents. There I shared a room with my brother. My mother and my brother were very pleased about my return. My father received this return with indifference. I had to determine that my parents were heavily indebted through my father's timber business. I cannot state the amount of the debts. The debts are due especially to the fact that my father had bid too high for timber and could then resell it only at a loss. Through my uncle Eugen Elser in Koenigsbronn I learned that my father had always been under the influence of alcohol at the timber auctions and only for that reason had bid high prices. My father drank beer and wine almost daily in Koenigsbronn and the surrounding area, where he had business to do. I cannot state the quantities. Neither my mother nor my brother could exert any influence on him. I know that my father had already consumed a great deal of alcohol in my youth. My mother continued to carry out the agricultural work, and my brother was a journeyman cabinetmaker with the master cabinetmaker Sapper in Koenigsbronn.

[Agricultural helper with his parents; cabinetmaker (August 1932-spring 1936)]

As before, after my return to Koenigsbronn I helped my mother with the completion of the agricultural work. Furthermore, I set up a small cabinetmaker's workshop on my parents' property, where I made individual pieces of furniture for various people in Koenigsbronn. For this I used the tools that I had previously acquired from my earnings. Here and there, also as before, I helped my father with forest work, cleaning and sawing poles. I received no compensation for this. I lived and ate at home without payment.

My father's drinking bouts increased more and more. The result was that the debts became higher and higher and that he repeatedly had to sell fields in order to meet his obligations. I repeatedly tried to influence my father in a favorable sense, but had no success with this. My father would not let anyone tell him anything, not even me. The household was maintained from the proceeds of the harvest.

My father almost always came home very late. When he was drunk, he always made a disturbance at home and scolded me, my mother, and my brother without any cause. He always declared that we were to blame that things were going more and more downhill. Mistreatment did not occur in the process. Nor, in contrast to earlier times, did he demolish anything.

By the end of 1935 the debts were already so great that my father had to sell the property. He sold the property, which in my estimation was worth 10,000 to 11,000 RM, for 6,500 RM to the cattle dealer Maurer in Koenigsbronn. Maurer was always together with my father in taverns, where they drank together. From the proceeds of the property my mother received 2,000 RM upon demand. My father used the remaining amount to pay his debts and for further drinking. The property was then also sold and occupied by the cattle dealer Maurer. In the sale it had been agreed that a small room would continue to be available to my father. He continued to live in this. My mother had to go to Schnaitheim to my sister Friederike; my brother went to the Labor Service at that time; and I rented a place with Mrs. Haerlen. I kept the inventory of my workshop. I stored it with Haerlen in the cellar. My mother took the household furnishings with her to Schnaitheim. We possessed only an orchard, which is still today the property of my parents in Koenigsbronn. What my mother did in Schnaitheim and what she lived on is not known to me.

[Residence with the Haerlen family in Koenigsbronn (1936-1937)]

I was still living on my parents' property until spring 1936. I left it only after I had been asked to do so by the new owner, Maurer. Only then did I rent a place with Mrs. Haerlen in Koenigsbronn. My mother had gone to Schnaitheim approximately a quarter of a year before. Up to that time I continued as before to make pieces of furniture for people in Koenigsbronn. My father continued to live in the property.

[Journeyman cabinetmaker with Friedrich Grupp in Koenigsbronn (spring-autumn 1936)]

After I had to leave the property and could no longer carry out occasional jobs, I then entered employment with the master cabinetmaker Grupp in Koenigsbronn. I was hired there as a journeyman cabinetmaker; in addition, another journeyman and an apprentice were employed there. At Grupp's too I had to make home furnishings. I had an hourly wage there of 0.55 RM. Work was daily from 7:00 to 12:00 and from 13:00 to 18:00. At that time I spent my free time mainly making music.

[Making music: flute, accordion, zither, double bass]

I am musical by nature. Already during my school years I played the flute and accordion. After my school years I played only accordion. In smaller groups I provided musical entertainment. Thus, around 1924 in Ochsenberg near Koenigsbronn I played accordion at a dancing lesson. I had no special skill. I was, as one says, an average player. I played only by ear. At that time I did not know notes, that is, not more than I still knew from school. At the beginning of 1927, before I went away from Koenigsbronn, I sold the accordion to an acquaintance of mine named Maurer from Zaunberg, a farm near Koenigsbronn. As far as I still remember, I had had this instrument sent to me by an instrument factory for the price of about 25 RM during my employment as a journeyman cabinetmaker. The money came from my wages, which I was then allowed partly to give to my mother and partly to keep for my personal needs.

For what price I sold it again I no longer know today. In any case I had taken very good care of the accordion.

[Traditional-costume association "Oberrheintaler"]

During my stay in Constance, about 1926, I bought a concert zither from the cabinetmaker Dassler in Constance for the price of 20 RM. Where Dassler lived in Constance I no longer know. I met Dassler in 1926 in the traditional-costume association "Oberrheintaler." I likewise joined this association as a member in 1926. I was not made aware of this association by any acquaintances, but, as far as I remember, learned of the existence of this association on the occasion of a tavern visit. Every Saturday evening the association held its practice evenings in the inn "Zum Kratzer" in Constance. Music and dance were practiced. At these entertainment evenings, the family members of the members and their acquaintances were always also present. The direction of the practice hours was in the hands of the chairman of the traditional-costume association, named Klingler. Where Klingler lived in Constance and what he was by occupation I no longer know today. As far as I still know, he changed his residence twice. Besides Klingler, I got to know the Dassler family from Constance in the traditional-costume

association. The Dasslers had a daughter Rosa, with whom, however, I had no relationship. Rosa already had an acquaintance. If I am asked about other families whom I got to know at that time, I can still name the Stoehr family -- the spelling of the name perhaps also different -- who, I believe, was a typesetter and had two girls who were still going to school at that time. With the exception of a certain Keuterer, I cannot remember by name any further families that at that time frequented the traditional-costume association and whom I got to know.

It is not the case that I joined the traditional-costume association because of the girls. One can find girls somewhere else too. I had no closer relationship with girls from the association. Of course it happened that on the way home one kissed one or another.

In Constance, purely out of interest in music and especially in zither playing, I already took private lessons in order to learn this instrument. I went to a music teacher who, if I am not mistaken, was called Hardegen or something similar, paid 1.50 RM for individual lessons, and took perhaps 25 to 30 lessons with him. Then I changed teachers. Why I did this, I no longer know exactly today. In any case, from then on I took my zither lessons from the chairman of the zither club, Stoessel. It may be that I changed at the moment when I joined the zither club. With Stoessel too, with whom the lesson cost 2 RM, I took about 25 to 30 lessons. Then, although I remained in the zither club, I took no more lessons, because of the money.

It is therefore understandable that perhaps at the beginning of 1933 in Koenigsbronn I joined the zither club. I sought distraction from the conditions at home in music. The chairman of this music association was the iron founder Heinrich Hiermann. At first the club consisted of 12 and later of 8 members. These were: locksmith or turner Fritz Huber from Koenigsbronn, then about 24 or 25 years old; then Georg Elser, a distant relative of mine, locksmith from Koenigsbronn; then my brother Leonhard; Anton Egetemeier, tailor from Koenigsbronn; further Paul Huber, a brother of the aforementioned Fritz Huber; furthermore two Staudelmeier brothers, first names no longer in my memory; in addition three young ladies: Hartmann, first name no longer in my memory, and two other ladies whose names I no longer know. As far as I know, this zither club was registered with the police in Koenigsbronn. The club evenings took place weekly on Friday or Saturday in the tavern "Hecht" in Koenigsbronn. These were held in the side room of the indicated tavern. At the club evenings only music was played. Here and there, concert and dance evenings were held by this club in the Hoesselsaal in Koenigsbronn. I regularly participated in these events and club evenings. The concert zither was with Georg Schmauder, Schnaitheim, Benzstrasse 18. I gave it to him for safekeeping. In the spring of 1939 in Schnaitheim I sold the double bass to an acquaintance by sight for 80 RM. The sale occurred because I no longer had any use for this double bass. I had acquired the double bass from my savings in 1934 in Schwenningen or otherwise from some music shop -- I can provide no details at present -- after the zither club at that time organized dance music, for which the bass was needed. I was given instruction in double-bass playing by an Ohnewald in Heidenheim. The first name and residence of this Ohnewald are no longer in my memory. This Ohnewald had been recommended to me by a member of the zither club as a double-bass teacher; who this was is likewise no longer known to me.

I was employed by master cabinetmaker Grupp until autumn 1936. In spring 1936 he had to make desks for the Wehrmacht, which had to be delivered by a certain time. For this reason Grupp also approached me at that time to enter employment with him. After completion of this delivery, I was occupied there with making home furnishings and installing window frames in a remodeling job. In autumn 1936 I gave notice myself at Grupp's, partly because the pay was too low for me and partly because he always wanted to instruct me, although he did not possess the abilities that I did. I parted from Grupp on good terms. I therefore gave notice at Grupp's for the reasons given, because I was of the definite opinion that I would soon find work again.

[Elsa Haerlen]

At first I set up a makeshift workshop with my material in the cellar of my landlady Haerlen, where I made a doll's room on behalf of Mrs. Greta Rose and kitchen chairs for the landlady Haerlen. The order for making the kitchen cupboard and the kitchen chairs had already been given to me by Mrs. Haerlen at the time when I was still employed by Grupp. For the doll's room I received about 5 RM. The production costs for Mrs. Haerlen's chairs were offset against the rent. The kitchen cupboard was not

finished by me after its completion was refused by Mrs. Haerlen's husband in December 1936 for a reason unknown to me. Since spring 1936 I had maintained a love relationship with Mrs. Haerlen; whether her husband had knowledge of this at that time is not known to me. The marriage of the Haerlen couple was divorced in autumn 1938 for this reason. I myself was a witness in court and, like Mrs. Haerlen, refused to testify.

[Laborer at the Armaturenfabrik Heidenheim (December 1936-March 1939)]

On 29 December 1936 I entered the firm Waldenmaier, Armaturenfabrik, in Heidenheim as a laborer. I came there through the mediation of the foreman Wilhelm Hermann, who was likewise employed there, was then resident in Itzelberg near Koenigsbronn, and whom I had met in mid-December 1936 in the tavern "Roessl" in Koenigsbronn. Hermann was known to me personally through his frequent stays in Koenigsbronn. During the conversation I told him my circumstances at the time, and he then proposed to me that I enter the armature works in Heidenheim as a laborer. Whether I had previously already looked around for a job as a trained cabinetmaker, I no longer know exactly. I believe, however, that I had found nothing of that sort, and so I accepted the laborer's position. As far as I remember, Hermann had offered to inquire at his firm, where he was a foreman, whether anything was free. After a few days he gave me an affirmative reply, that I should present myself. I traveled either by train or by bicycle to Heidenheim, presented myself, and was able one or two days later to begin there as a laborer in the casting-cleaning shop, where Hermann too was employed. I was told that I would not have to perform the dirty work of a casting cleaner for long, but would soon be allowed to do other, nicer work. In fact I had to do this work only for about half a year, that is, until summer 1937. Then I came into the shipping department, where I was occupied especially with checking incoming materials for completeness, etc. I carried out this activity until March 1939.

[Residence with his parents at Wiesenstrasse 4 in Koenigsbronn (1937-1939)]

As long as I worked at the Waldenmaier firm in Heidenheim, I always lived in Koenigsbronn. At first, until spring 1937, still with Mrs. Haerlen, until the husband then gave me notice, probably after he had learned where I stood with his wife. Afterward I went to my parents, who in the meantime had bought half of a semi-detached house, which was, however, much smaller than our earlier house. I then remained living in my parents' house in an attic room until May 1939, when I went to Schnaitheim. I also took there the workshop that I had provisionally set up in the Haerlen house and set it up again provisionally in a basement room of my parents' house.

I traveled daily to the workplace in Heidenheim by bicycle in good weather and by train in bad weather. In the evening I returned in the same way. When I rode by bicycle, I was alone. I had no regular companion. When I went by train, one did of course see almost the same faces daily in the railway car, but I did not especially attach myself to any of these people. In the factory as well, throughout this entire year I did not attach myself more closely to any work colleague. I was generally known as quiet.

In the casting-cleaning shop I received 0.58 RM, later also 0.62 RM, hourly wage. I admit that as a trained cabinetmaker I would have received more elsewhere. But I had no interest in earning more, only in the work pleasing me. If I had earned more, I would have had no use from it anyway, because every amount above 24 RM weekly wage is seized from me to pay the alimony.

[Maria Schmauder]

I spent my free time partly by continuing to make music. The zither association still existed. Partly I was also occupied in the workshop at home making a small chest, which required much work. I made this for a certain Maria Schmauder from Schnaitheim, whom I had met in the factory. My acquaintance with Maria Schmauder dates from the time when Mrs. Haerlen was still living in Koenigsbronn. At first I had little contact with Maria, later somewhat more, and when I then lived in Schnaitheim, naturally often. In summer 1937 Mrs. Haerlen, who in the meantime, before the official divorce, had already separated from her husband, moved first to her home village Jebenhausen near Goeppingen, then to Esslingen, where she is still employed today in a woolen factory and lives in a factory home. The relationship with Maria Schmauder was not very close. We got along well, also kissed each other once, but to this day we have remained on formal address terms. I never had sexual intercourse with her.

So the whole year 1937 and a large part of 1938 passed without anything changing or happening in my life. In the shipping department at Waldenmaier's, in my activity no one was set over me except the operations manager Koerner. Two more people were assigned to me. One of these two was an older married man named Staud. The other was one or two years younger than I; his name does not occur to me at the moment. He is the one to whom I sold my bicycle for 16 RM in December 1938 or January 1939. I got along well with these two. Here and there one of the workers from the workshops also helped out in the shipping department, namely whenever his machine was defective for a short time.

At that time I visited taverns only for the purpose of taking the midday meal. From 1937 until the beginning of 1938 I took meals in the tavern "Zum Schlachthof" in Heidenheim. I had a fixed place there; originally this was at the table at the entrance on the right, and later I moved it to the table in the rear right corner. Table companions were workers from the armature works, whom I knew not by name but only by sight. The change of place occurred only because my place at the table to the right of the entrance was often occupied when I arrived. In the evening I never frequented this tavern. From the beginning of January I took my midday meal in the tavern "Koenig Karl." The change of establishment occurred only because I had a desire for better food; the selection in the tavern "Koenig Karl" was also larger than in the tavern "Zum Schlachthof." I had no fixed place in the tavern "Koenig Karl." During the midday meal in the taverns I only rarely took part in conversations. I also visited this tavern here and there in the evening in order to have my supper there before I went home. Apart from the tavern "Hecht," where the club evenings of the zither club in Koenigsbronn took place, I did not visit taverns in the evening either in Heidenheim, Koenigsbronn, or anywhere else.

[Special department at the Armaturenfabrik Heidenheim]

I still have the following to add concerning my activity in the armature factory in Heidenheim:

Already when I entered this works, there existed in the armature works in Heidenheim a so-called "special department," in which powder grains were pressed and shell fuzes were manufactured. To my knowledge, the head of this special department is operations manager Koch. How many workers are employed in the special department is not known to me. The workforce of the armature works consists of about 1,000 men. The powder is pressed in a building outside the factory. The building in which the shell fuzes are manufactured is located within the factory grounds. For this special department, samples and specimens of fuzes and fuze parts often arrived at the armature works; I received these for the firm and, after checking the shipment, passed them on to the individual masters in the special department. The receipt and correctness of these shipments was entered by me in the shipping department. The handover to the individual masters was not entered in a book; that is, this was done only beginning in autumn 1938. In the fuze department the masters employed at that time were Neuer, Schuetz, Bauder junior and senior, and the son of operations manager Koch.

Masters Neuer and Schuetz were employed in the section of the special department where the fuzes were assembled. I had to deliver the incoming threaded screws, cardboard rings, and cellulose lacquer to Neuer. These were not only incoming samples but also ordered material that was needed there. I had to hand over band springs, needle pieces, slotted nuts, firing pins, wooden plungers, springs, and bolts to master Schuetz. Here too it was not only samples but also ordered material. Masters Bauder junior and senior and Koch were in the automatic-machine hall and in the turret-lathe shop. To them I had only to hand over tools, machine spare parts, and the like, which had been ordered from there and had arrived on the basis of the order. In the powder-press department I had to deliver the incoming crates and barrels that contained powder to a worker. The name of this worker is not known to me at the moment. There was no master there.

From there I also had to take empty crates and barrels back again to the shipping department. These empty crates and barrels were brought by me to a room on the ground floor, where they were received by a worker. The two assistants assigned to me also helped with the handing over of the incoming ordered material.

I was neither friends nor more closely acquainted with the above-mentioned masters or with a worker employed in the special department. I knew these people only by sight. No one in the special department showed me how fuzes are assembled and put together. Nor did I ever watch how such

fuzes were assembled. This was forbidden by the management. In the special department I merely had to deliver the incoming material and leave again immediately.

When I entered the armature factory in Heidenheim, I did not know that such a special department existed there. Hermann also gave me no information about it. I first learned of the work of the special department while I was still employed in the casting-cleaning shop. At that time I observed how, in the factory yard, so-called blanks, that is, raw pressed parts for fuze heads, were transported on a handcart from one department to another. I saw these parts for the first time then. Whether I asked at that time and was then told for what purpose these blanks were used, or whether I myself came upon it after some time, I no longer know today. As long as I was employed in the casting-cleaning shop, I did not concern myself further with the work of the special department. Only through my activity in the shipping department did I learn the details about the work of the special department. I was transferred into the shipping department by the management without my own doing and without the advocacy of another person.

Although I was not allowed to watch how fuzes were assembled, I nevertheless saw various individual parts that passed through my hands, for example the needles for ignition, and in addition I also often had drawings in my hands on which the exact measurements for the inspection gauges were specified. I never saw drawings of a finished or semi-finished fuze, nor such drawings of particular individual parts. How a fuze functions I did not learn at that time and still do not know today. That is surely complicated.

Until the decision for my act in autumn 1938, I stole neither parts nor powder in the factory.

The powder presses set up in our factory processed both granulated powder arriving at our place into pressed powder plates for our own need in producing the fuzes, and apparently also for other factories. At least it was the case that much more granulated powder arrived at our place than we processed, and pressed powder was again delivered by us to various places.

Until summer 1937, to my knowledge, in the shipping department of the armature works only one man with two and later three to four assistants was present for incoming and outgoing goods. After the works had enlarged and the incoming and outgoing traffic had thereby increased, these tasks could no longer be handled by the previous personnel alone. Therefore the responsibility for incoming and outgoing goods was separated. I had to handle the incoming goods with my already mentioned assistant; the outgoing goods were handled by the previous head of the shipping department, named Koch. The names of his assistants do not occur to me at the moment. I had only business contact with Koch; I was not friends with him.

I made the decision for my act in autumn 1938.

In my whole life I have not read much. Novels, so-called booklets with youth stories, and other books I have not read at all. Once I half-read a newspaper novel. Then it became too stupid for me. As technical literature I read only the Building and Furniture Cabinetmaker's Newspaper.

[State of health]

Asked about my illnesses, injuries, and general state of health, etc., I state the following:

At the age of about five or six, in any case before attending school, I had a childhood illness. I no longer know exactly whether it was red spots, measles, or scarlet fever. Apart from that, as far as I know, I was often ill as a child. I mainly and frequently suffered from fever illnesses and occasional skin rashes. The same illnesses also still occurred during the school years. I do not know what this involved; I can only remember also having had headaches often.

The complaints that I already mentioned during the period of my activity in the iron-turning shop likewise expressed themselves mainly in headaches.

Also in the later period up to today, more often than others I had to do with fever illnesses connected with headaches. I have never, however, gone through a serious illness. I also believe that at present I am completely healthy. I have never observed in myself a venereal disease or any signs of one.

I lost the little finger of my right hand almost completely as a small boy of seven by getting this finger between the gears of the transmission at my father's grindstone. I had no other serious injuries. It just occurs to me: at the age of about 30 I fell while trimming a tree on my father's property. In doing so I broke a rib. I did not go to the hospital then. I did not suffer any further injuries in this accident either. Another case: in spring 1939, perhaps May, a large stone fell on my foot in the quarry. This led to a fracture of the left forefoot. I was written off sick for nine weeks and remained under medical treatment for that long. I did not go to the hospital.

Whether among my grandparents or other relatives someone died of a particular disease or committed suicide is not known to me. I have heard nothing of it.

Apart from the occasional but rare small sip of beer from my father's glass in earlier youth, I drank my first glass of beer perhaps at the age of ten. But until the age of 16 or 17 this occurred quite rarely. In my whole life I have perhaps only been drunk three times. Not even when I regularly worked in the workshop did I drink beer daily. I have never drunk more than six glasses of beer at one time. With this quantity I am already drunk. I drank wine or schnapps altogether very rarely. Perhaps at the age of 24 I began to smoke. After two years, however, I again became a nonsmoker. During this time I smoked about 20 cigarettes a week. Since then I have not smoked at all. I do not know any other intoxicants that are named to me.

Sexual life

I received my first knowledge of the processes of procreation, as I remember, through a schoolmate. Until my 22nd year I had no sexual relationship of any kind. The concept of masturbation is known to me only in theory. I never undertook any attempts of a sexual kind. During my stay in Constance I had sexual intercourse for the first time with a certain Brunhilde, of whom only the first name remains in my memory. My further experiences in this field also fall within my stay in Constance. Brunhilde was followed by a certain Anna, then Mathilde Niedermann, then Hilda Lang, and then later, during my stay in Koenigsbronn, my landlady there, Haerlen, who today, as already mentioned, lives in Esslingen.

With the other girls with whom I occasionally maintained a relationship, I had no sexual intercourse.

[Son Manfred]

Intercourse with Mathilde Niedermann had consequences. At that time, when she believed that she was in the second month of pregnancy, an address in Geneva was given to us where this would be removed. The address no longer occurs to me. We traveled together, that is, Mathilde and I, to Geneva. Mathilde was examined and it was determined that she was already in the fourth month and that an intervention could no longer be carried out. A woman performed this examination at that time. We did not have to pay anything for it. We stayed one night in Geneva and traveled the next day back to Constance. I paid the travel costs. The child was born. It is a boy, Manfred. Mathilde Niedermann later married. What her name is today I do not know. For alimony payments, the surpluses of my weekly wage, as soon as they exceed 24 marks, are deducted from me each week. I saw the child Manfred often until about the age of half a year, but not since. I always had the intention of taking the boy to myself later, or to my mother.

Any perverse forms of sexual intercourse are not known to me even theoretically.

Note:

The written record of this section of the interrogation was taken from the accused's popular mode of expression.

Religious life

My mother is strictly religious, my father much less so. Both, as well as I and all my siblings, are Protestant. In our entire family there is no Protestant clergyman. My mother always prayed with me as a child. When I became somewhat older, I continued this on my own, and indeed I prayed the Lord's Prayer, not always but often, before falling asleep. Personally, that is, from a free heart and in self-chosen words, I never prayed to God. I never included my act, or the wish for its success, in my prayer. As a child I was occasionally taken to church on Sundays by my parents; later I went alone many

times, but finally less and less often. Only in the course of this year did I again go to church more often, namely perhaps around 30 times since the beginning of the year up to today. In recent times I also more often went on weekdays into a Catholic church, when there was no Protestant church there, in order to pray my Lord's Prayer there. In my opinion it makes no difference whether one does this in a Protestant or Catholic church. I admit that these frequent church visits and this frequent praying were connected with my act, which occupied me inwardly, insofar as I certainly would not have prayed so much if I had not been preparing or planning the act. It is true that after a prayer I was always somewhat calmer again.

If I am asked whether I consider the act committed by me to be a sin in the sense of Protestant doctrine, I would like to say, "in the deeper sense, no."

[Prevent greater bloodshed]

I believe in a continued life of the soul after death, and I also believed that I would one day come to heaven if I had still had the opportunity, through my further life, to prove that I wanted what was good. After all, by my act I also wanted to prevent even greater bloodshed.

I never maintained personal acquaintance with a Protestant clergyman. Even with our pastor in Koenigsbronn, who confirmed me, I afterwards had no contact of any kind. We also never wrote to each other.

With good Catholics I had no close contact, except for the already mentioned Hilda Lang in Constance, with whom I did, however, during the time of our acquaintance often go to the Catholic church. My later visits to Catholic churches were prompted by no one.

Bible Students and other sects I know only by name. As far as I know, my mother goes, besides church, also to a prayer meeting. But I never went along and know nothing more precise about it.

Political life history

My parents were and are completely unpolitical. I remember that my father went to any elections only if someone fetched him. What he voted for, I do not know. When I reached voting age, he in any case did not influence me in any way. I believe my mother probably did go to vote, but never said to whom she gave her vote.

My father belonged neither to a party nor to any association. I also cannot remember ever having heard my father talk politics. Earlier my parents subscribed to the "Grenzbote," our local paper. This newspaper still exists today. For years, however, no newspaper has been read in my parents' house. I believe because of the money.

[The page number 79 was evidently skipped by mistake.]

I myself, apart from the already mentioned Furniture and Building Cabinetmaker's Newspaper, have up to now not read a newspaper regularly. Wherever I happened to come, in inns, etc., I read whatever was just there. The "Schwaebische Tagwacht" (Wuerttemberg Social Democratic newspaper) is still known to me by name; in my home area it existed, but I myself never read it. I cannot remember the name "Sueddeutsche Arbeiterzeitung" (KPD).

Personally I never came forward politically. After reaching voting age I always voted for the KPD list, because I thought this is a workers' party that will surely stand up for the workers. I never became a member of this party, however, because I thought it was enough if I gave my vote. I never took part in any actions such as distributing leaflets, throwing slips, demonstration marches, and smearings. During my entire professional activity I was never active on the works council. I was a member of the trade union of the Woodworkers' Association because this was the association of workers in my occupation and because one was supposed to be a member of this association. With the exception of a period still to be described later, I also never took part in party-political meetings.

In 1928 or 1929 in Constance I joined the RFB. But I was only a paying member, for I never had a uniform or any functionary post. In all, during my entire RFB membership I was only three times at a political meeting, naturally of the KPD. I joined the RFB through the frequent urging of a workmate

named Fiebig, who at that time, like me, worked in the clock manufacturing shop in Constance and lived with me for some time in Inselgasse in Constance.

If I am asked whether I knew that the KPD had the intention and goal of establishing a council dictatorship or a dictatorship of the proletariat in Germany, I must say that it is not impossible that I once heard something like that. But I certainly did not think anything about it. I thought nothing other than that one had to strengthen the mandates of the Communists by casting one's vote and that in this way the party could then do more for the working class. I never heard anything of a violent overthrow.

I never interested myself in the program of the KPD. I therefore also cannot state how, in the event of a KPD victory, the economic situation would have been rearranged. In the meetings there was only talk that more wages should be paid, better apartments should be created, and similar things. The presentation of these demands was enough for me to orient myself as a Communist.

Economic circumstances

My economic circumstances are in order. Most of my life I had work and earnings. I have no assets and none to expect, since my parents' property is heavily covered with debts. Personally I have no debts. Around nine years ago the District Court of Constance sentenced me to pay 45 RM monthly for the support of my son Manfred. Naturally I have never been able to make this payment in full up to today, so that a considerable debt has accumulated thereby. How much it amounts to today I do not even want to know.

Previous convictions

I have no previous convictions. Criminal proceedings have never before been pending against me.

The interrogation is broken off at 20:00.

Signed Schmidt, signed Kappler, signed Seibold. Criminal Commissioners.

GEORG ELSER - BERLIN GESTAPO INTERROGATION PROTOCOL

Section 3 of 5 — 21 November 1939

Rapid literal English working translation

Continuation of the interrogation on 21 November 1939 at 8:30 a.m.

Worldview

In response to questioning, Elser states:

I believe that the whole world and also human life was created by God. I also believe that nothing takes place in the world of which God knows nothing. Human beings will probably have their free course, but God can interfere whenever He wants.

He also allowed me my free course. Whether He also interfered in my deed and caused the Führer to leave earlier, I do not know.

I did not know that in Russia there are no longer any churches and no longer any clergymen. I have never read that and do not believe it at all. On the other hand I believe that the German government wants to abolish the churches existing in Germany, that is, religions. As far as I know or have heard, all Germans are supposed to believe only in one doctrine. They are supposed to become German Christians. If I am asked whether I consider that good or bad, I cannot answer this, because I do not know the doctrine of the German Christians.

I believe in heaven and hell, as I heard it in school in religious instruction and confirmation instruction. I believe that God can also be personally addressed in prayer and that He hears it and can fulfill it, if He wants.

Note:

Several concepts from the National Socialist worldview are explained to the accused. These lines of thought are allegedly unknown to him.

B) On the matter

In the autumn of 1938 I was, as already mentioned, employed in the shipping department of the Heidenheim fittings factory and lived with my parents in Königsbronn.

[Situation of the working class]

In my opinion, conditions among the working class have worsened in various respects since the national revolution. For example, I observed that wages became lower and deductions higher. Whereas in 1929 in the clock factory in Konstanz I earned an average of 50 RM per week, the deductions at that time for tax, health insurance, unemployment assistance, and invalidity stamps amounted to only about 5 RM. Today the deductions are already that high even with a weekly income of 25 RM. The hourly wage of a cabinetmaker in 1929 was one Reichsmark; today only an hourly wage of 68 pfennigs is paid. I remember that in 1929 even an hourly wage of 1.05 RM was paid according to the tariff. From conversations with various workers it is known that in other occupational groups too, after the national uprising, wages were lowered and deductions became larger. I cannot cite examples.

Furthermore, in my opinion the working class has been under a certain compulsion since the national revolution. A worker, for example, can no longer change his place of work as he wants; because of the HJ he is no longer master of his children, and also in religious respects he can no longer act so freely.

Here I am thinking particularly of the activity of the German Christians. No further examples occur to me at the moment. I made these findings and observations up to the year 1938 and also afterward. In the course of this time I also found that because of this the working class has "a rage" against the government. I made these findings in general; individual persons who expressed themselves in this

sense I cannot name. I made these findings in the workplaces where I worked, in taverns, and during train journeys; with the best will I cannot name individual persons. The names of these persons are not known to me. I must admit that now and then it also occurred that in such conversations individual persons, likewise unknown to me, contradicted this. In the conversations about the allegedly bad social conditions, I too took part and shared the opinion of my comrades about this. There was never any talk about how these conditions could be eliminated.

[War unavoidable]

In the autumn of 1938, according to my observations, war was generally expected among the working class. I can no longer say today whether this was due only to the political events in the autumn of last year or also to other reasons. Because of this, great unrest prevailed among the working class. I too suspected that because of the Sudeten question things would "go wrong," that is, that war would come. After the Munich conference, calm returned among the working class; the war was regarded as settled. Whether war continued to be discussed among the working class afterward, I can no longer say today.

Already at this time last year I was convinced that the Munich agreement would not be the end of it, that Germany would make further demands upon other countries and would incorporate other countries, and that therefore a war was unavoidable; that is, I had the suspicion that it would come to that. This was my own view. I cannot remember that work comrades spoke after the Munich Agreement of 1938 about a further danger of war. I do admit, however, that during this period I listened to foreign radio broadcasts.

[Radio Moscow]

In the autumn or winter of 1938, or perhaps only at the beginning of 1939, I had a radio set given to me on trial by the music dealer Klein in Heidenheim. I believe it was a Philips set which, to my knowledge, was supposed to cost over 200 RM. I actually intended to buy a set on installments. But because my mother, whenever I turned it on at home, always said that she did not need entertainment, I then did not buy it, but returned it after about fourteen days. At home I had the set standing in my chamber and had connected it to my electric lamp by means of an adapter. With this set, while searching for all possible stations, I happened to hear German being spoken somewhere. The name "Moscow" was not marked on the dial; otherwise I would have found it right away and would not have had to search long. This must not be understood as meaning that I had especially searched for the Moscow station. I meant it in the sense that otherwise I would have known right away where Moscow was. I therefore did not search for Moscow, but only came upon it accidentally while turning the dial. When listening to the spoken broadcast, I then noticed that it must be Moscow. Whether I already knew beforehand that the Moscow station also broadcast in German, I no longer know today. From then on I tuned in this station more often. During the entire time in which I had the set, perhaps three or four times. Other German-speaking foreign stations I never listened to with this set. Other stations of this kind, or Moscow, I then did not hear again until I moved to the Schmauders in Schnaitheim in May 1939.

When I moved to the Schmauders, I believe they did not yet have a radio. They acquired one only after I was already living there. I must correct myself: it occurs to me just now that the Schmauders already had their set when I moved in with them. What make it was, I do not know. As far as I know, it had cost approximately 170 to 200 RM.

The set stood there in the kitchen. With this set we, that is whoever was in the kitchen at the time, often listened to the Strasbourg station. Likewise a Swiss station. In the evenings, when the Schmauder family was in bed, I then sometimes switched on the Moscow station alone and listened to German broadcasts. On this set too the name "Moscow" was not marked. Apart from German radio stations and perhaps once or twice an English station, I did not hear other stations there. I do not know the Freedom Station 29.8 or other stations of this kind. In the Schmauder family circle, the content of the broadcasts was then also discussed. I can no longer recall details of these conversations today. But I still remember that certain reports which were obviously false were rejected by us. About others people discussed whether they might perhaps be correct.

[Motive for the deed]

The dissatisfaction among the working class observed by me since 1933 and the unavoidable war suspected by me since autumn 1938 constantly occupied my thoughts. Whether this was before or after the September crisis of 1938, I can no longer say today. I reflected by myself on how the conditions of the working class could be improved and a war avoided. I was prompted to this by no one, nor was I influenced by anyone in this sense. I never heard conversations of this or a similar kind. From the Moscow station, too, I never heard that the German government and the regime had to be overthrown. The reflections I undertook led to the result that conditions in Germany could be changed only by eliminating the present leadership. By leadership I understood the "top people"; by that I mean Hitler, Göring, and Goebbels. Through my reflections I came to the conviction that, by eliminating these three men, other men would come into the government who would make no intolerable demands upon foreign countries, "who would not want to include any foreign country," and who would see to an improvement of the social conditions of the working class. I had neither then nor later thought of particular persons who should take over the government. At that time I did not want to eliminate National Socialism. I was convinced that National Socialism had power in its hands and would not give it up again. I was merely of the opinion that by eliminating the three named men a moderation in political objectives would occur. I can state definitely that I did not in the least think of another party or organization which, after the elimination of the leadership, would have taken the helm in Germany. I also spoke with no one about this point.

The thought of eliminating the leadership no longer let me rest at that time, and already in the autumn of 1938 — this was before November 1938 — on the basis of the reflections I was constantly making, I had formed the decision to undertake the elimination of the leadership myself. I thought to myself that this would be possible only if the leadership was present at some rally. From the daily press I learned at that time that the next meeting at which the leadership would also take part was to take place on 8 and 9 November 1938 in Munich in the Bürgerbräukeller. I certainly can no longer say, however, whether I actually learned of this meeting from the newspaper or in some other way. Whether this will occur to me later, I cannot say.

[First trip to Munich (8-9 November 1938)]

On 8 November 1938 I traveled by train from Königsbronn to Munich in order to observe the course of the rally on 8 November in the Bürgerbräukeller in Munich. At that time I wanted to make sure whether and what possibilities were present there to carry out my decision. Up to then I had not thought about the manner of carrying out my decision. As far as I remember, I arrived in Munich at about 19:00 on 8 November 1938. The time of departure from Königsbronn is no longer in my memory. Immediately after the arrival of the train in Munich, I went from the train to the lodging office in Munich main station, where I asked for quarters for the night.

Without difficulty a room in Albanistrasse was assigned to me. The house number and the lodging provider are no longer known to me. I believe that I would still be able to find this property today. The lodging office was located half-left of the platform I had left. Above the entrance was a large inscription "Quartieramt." Whether it was the lodging office for 8/9 November, I do not know. There were several counters in this lodging office; the personnel of the lodging office and the public there were partly in Party uniform, partly in civilian clothes. Whether I was asked there for my name and origin and whether I was asked whether I was a march participant of 1923 is no longer in my memory. I believe that I was merely asked in which area I wished accommodation. I expressed no wish in that respect. There I was merely handed a slip with the inscription "Albanistrasse," house number, and landlord. I definitely did not receive a program for the course of 8/9 November in Munich. Whether I had to pay anything for the lodging, I no longer know today. From the lodging office I went directly to Albanistrasse.

Since I had no local knowledge in Munich, I traveled there by streetcar. A streetcar conductor gave me the appropriate information when I asked how to get to the indicated apartment. After I arrived in the indicated apartment, I had to determine that there was no overnight accommodation there at all. The people themselves then took care of me and quartered me one floor lower with a family no longer known to me today. As far as I know, I had to sleep there on the sofa. I did not register with the police there. When the people asked me, I gave them my correct name, Georg Elser, and my place of residence, Königsbronn. I told these people that I merely wanted to see Munich. They asked me no

further questions. I arrived in Albanistrasse at about 20:00. At about 20:15 I left there on foot for the Bürgerbräukeller. If I am not mistaken, I asked my hosts for the best way there. It is also possible that on the way I asked passers-by about the Bürgerbräukeller. I can no longer describe the route I took there. I can only remember that I went along the Isar for a stretch. When I came to Rosenheimer Strasse, the roadway there was blocked and the public had taken up positions on the sidewalk. I also took up a position there and waited to see whether there would be anything special to see. From there I could not see the Bürgerbräukeller. I stood at Rosenheimer Berg at the junction with Hochstrasse. I stood there until about 22:30, until the people had dispersed. After that I continued along Rosenheimer Strasse out of town in order to get to the Bürgerbräukeller itself. When I arrived at the Bürgerbräukeller the cordon had already been lifted. The entrance was still lit. From the main entrance I went through the cloakroom directly into the hall, where individual persons were still present. From the hall entrance I went about as far as the middle of the hall, looked at it, determined where the speaker's podium stood and what decorations were present. I did not go up to the gallery itself. I did not there make any considerations about how an assassination attempt could best be carried out in this hall. After I had looked at the arrangement of the hall, I went from there through the cloakroom into the so-called Bräustübl of the Bürgerbräukeller, where I sat down at the first table to take supper. This must have been around 23:00. After about a quarter of an hour a man unknown to me took a seat at my table and addressed me, after I had drunk very little of my beer. There were seven other persons at this table; whether they had already taken their seats before me is no longer in my memory. Because he also noticed from my dialect that I am Swabian, he introduced himself to me as slaughterhouse administrator in Aalen/Württemberg. I gave him my correct name and my correct place of residence. No further conversation took place with this man; as far as I remember, he paid for a half-liter of beer for me. This man was approximately 1.74 meters tall and about 37 or 38 years old. I cannot give a more precise description. I did not speak with other persons there. At about 24:00, after paying my bill, I left the Bürgerbräukeller and went on foot to my quarters. In doing so I took the same route by which I had reached the Bürgerbräukeller. At about 0:30 I was back in Albanistrasse. I went immediately to my room and lay down on the sofa to sleep. My hosts had already gone to rest.

On 9 November 1938 I took breakfast with my hosts at about 8:00 and then went on foot, by the route already known to me, again to the Bürgerbräukeller, where I watched the formation of the procession of 9 November 1923. I had taken up a position among the public on the sidewalk opposite the entrance of the Bürgerbräukeller. I arrived there at about 11:00. I watched there the formation of the procession of 9 November and also saw the Führer arrive. After the procession had set off, I too went into the city center and looked at the city, then went to the station, from where I traveled by train back to Königsbronn. I cannot recall details; I know only that I looked at the city. The time of departure is likewise no longer known to me. I know only that I reached Königsbronn again the same evening.

I did not call again on the lodging people in Munich. For the lodging I voluntarily paid something; I believe it was 1 RM. When I left in the morning I told them that I would watch the procession of 9 November and then immediately return home. The trip from Königsbronn to Munich and from Munich back to Königsbronn cost me approximately 11 to 12 RM. I cannot state this exactly; whether I used a Sunday ticket is not in my memory, and I also do not know whether I traveled by express train. I traveled third class. I paid for the trip out of my own funds. What clothing I wore at that time I can no longer state today. I made the trip to Munich alone and also returned to Königsbronn alone. I made no travel acquaintances, and in Munich too I met no acquaintance; I merely spoke for some time with the already mentioned slaughterhouse administrator from Aalen. I did not establish any connections in Munich at that time. What I explained at home and at my then workplace about my absence at that time, I no longer know today. Perhaps I reported sick at the factory.

It occurs to me just now that after inspecting the hall of the Bürgerbräukeller I was also able to determine that the hall was not guarded in any way, that there was no control, and that anyone could gain access to this hall without difficulty.

After two or three days, during my free time, I reflected on the place in the hall where "something could be done." On the basis of my inspection of the hall, I considered it suitable for an attack "on the leadership." At that time I came to the firm decision to carry out the assassination attempt there. At that time I had not yet thought about the manner of carrying it out.

[Theft of 250 pressed pieces of powder (from November 1938)]

In the following weeks I then slowly worked out in my mind that it would be best to pack explosive material into that particular pillar behind the speaker's podium and ignite this explosive material at the proper time by means of some device. What this ignition device would have to look like, I was not yet clear about at that time. I chose the pillar because the pieces flying about in an explosion would have to hit the people at and around the speaker's podium. In addition, I was already thinking that perhaps the ceiling might collapse. Which persons, however, would be sitting around the speaker's podium at the event, I did not know. But I knew that Hitler would speak and assumed that the leadership would be seated in his immediate vicinity.

Up to then I had neither theoretically nor practically concerned myself with the construction of any device by which explosive material could be ignited at a predetermined time. For this reason I had also never before made any drawings of such an ignition device or infernal machine, nor had I made preparations for the construction of models.

After my return from my first visit to Munich (that is, on 8/9 November 1938; about 19 years before I had already once been in Munich for the Oktoberfest), I continued my work in the fittings factory as before. During working hours I did not occupy myself with my special plans. I used my free time for that. Before I was clear about the exact execution of the plan, however, I had already laid in a supply of explosive material by using my position in the shipping department of the named firm to steal, little by little over several months, a total of 250 pressed pieces of powder. Such a small disk of pressed powder was 9 mm thick and had a diameter of 19 mm. The theft was not noticed in the factory. I had always taken the individual pieces inconspicuously and quickly from the boxes standing by the powder presses. As long as I still lived at home, that is, before I had moved to Schnaitheim, I kept the accumulating supply of powder in my wardrobe in my chamber. I had wrapped the powder in paper, placed it at the bottom of the wardrobe, and covered the package with laundry. None of my relatives ever discovered this powder. I always kept my room locked.

When I had worked out the approximate construction of the device in my head and perhaps also already on a hand sketch — I no longer know exactly whether I did not make such a sketch only later — I determined that it was necessary to have the exact measurements of the pillar in which I wanted to install the device. Therefore I traveled once more to Munich and stayed there from 4 to 12 April 1939.

[Second trip to Munich (4-12 April 1939)]

On 4 April I departed by train, third class, from Königsbronn for Munich. The time of departure and of arrival in Munich is not known to me anymore. The first two days I spent the night in a tavern located opposite the cinema at Isartorplatz. The name of this tavern and the name of the innkeepers are not known to me. I registered there with the police under my correct name. After I did not like it in this tavern — it was too dirty and too uncomfortable for me — I quartered myself in a tavern in the east of Munich. I also cannot describe this tavern more precisely. According to Elser's explanations, a tavern in Bogenhausen or Haidhausen comes into question. There too I registered with the police under my correct name. In this tavern I spent the night two or three times. After all the rooms in this tavern were occupied on the following day, I went from there to a tavern near Rosenheimer Platz, which is located there, seen from the inner city, on the right side of Rosenheimer Strasse. I am not able to give the name of this tavern.

There too, as everywhere, I registered with the police under my correct name. I sought out these taverns myself; no one directed me to them. On average I paid 1.50 to 2.00 RM for the overnight stay in these taverns.

During this stay in Munich I once went into the hall of the Bürgerbräukeller, namely through the entrance from the Bräustübl, through the cloakroom. This was on the first or second day, that is, on 5 or 6 April 1939.

The doors through which I had to pass in order to get into the hall were open, that is, not locked. As I later observed, it was in fact always open during the day and was locked only at night. I no longer needed to consider where I would later install my explosive body. I was already clear that I would do

this above the gallery landing. Therefore at that time I immediately went up to the gallery, and, as far as I can remember, by the shortest way over the staircase to the left of the entrance. On the gallery I then measured the dimensions of the pillar in question with a folding meter-rule I had brought along and entered the outline dimensions in my notebook; that is, I made a small hand sketch in my notebook and noted the measurements on this sketch. I do not believe that at that time anyone besides me was in the hall; at least I cannot remember having seen anyone. I left the hall again by the main exit. Altogether I must have spent about five minutes in it. What time of day this was, I no longer know, but it was during the day. Whether, when leaving the Bürgerbräukeller, I went through the Bräustüberl, or even stayed in it, or used the direct exit from the cloakroom to the street, I also no longer know. By "Bräustübl" I mean the restaurant room located to the left from the main entrance.

During my entire stay I spent time in this restaurant room at least once each day and ate or drank something there. On the first or second day the houseboy of the Bürgerbräukeller, whose name is no longer in my memory, happened to sit down at my table in order to take a meal or drink a beer. [According to the protocol of 23 November 1939 the houseboy was named Renner.] In this way we fell into conversation, and among other things he told me that he would probably soon have to report for military service. This gave me the idea that it would be very favorable for the preparation of my intended deed if I could become houseboy there. I therefore asked the houseboy what he thought, whether I might not be able to have his position. He promised me he would ask the director. When in the following days I had to remind him again and again, and he told me that he had not yet had an opportunity to ask, I myself approached the director. He was very surprised to hear that his houseboy had a call-up order and, apparently following his conversation with me, gave the houseboy a scolding because he had not told him anything yet. The houseboy told me this afterward and scolded me for having asked the director without telling him anything about it beforehand. Later again the director came to my table when I happened again to be sitting in the Bürgerbräukeller and told me that it probably would not work out with my employment, because he hoped that his houseboy would be deferred. After that I spoke a few more times with the houseboy about this question, invited him several times to a glass of beer, and finally promised him 20 RM and later even 50 RM in writing if he would get me the position, in the event that he nevertheless had to report for military service. On which days the individual conversations and my promises to him took place, I no longer know. Twice I even went with the houseboy outside the Bürgerbräukeller to other taverns in order to drink a glass of beer. The first time, at his invitation, we went to the tavern "Am Gasteig." A third young man accompanied the two of us, whom the houseboy brought along and whom I had already seen before in the Bräustübl, but who was not known to me more closely and whose name I cannot remember. At the moment I cannot even imagine anymore what he looked like. The second time, again at the houseboy's invitation, we went to another tavern, whose name and exact location I cannot remember. There too we drank beer. I again paid for one or two glasses of beer for the other man. On this outing we were alone, without a third person.

Before I left Munich, I arranged with the houseboy that he should write to me if he had to report for service. I would then come to Munich, and if I had received the position the houseboy would have received 50 marks from me. I obligated myself to this, as already said, in writing. The houseboy probably asked me why the position was so important to me. I told him that this was the only possibility to come to Munich, where I always wanted to be. He apparently believed me. In any case he did not ask further, for the money seemed more important to him than my reasons. As I had seen, he liked to drink.

The matter with the houseboy, that is, the possibility of being employed in the Bürgerbräukeller, was the only reason why I stayed so long in Munich. If that had not been the case, I would have gone home much earlier, probably on the second or third day. I no longer know this completely exactly. It could also be that, depending on when Easter fell, I perhaps would have stayed in Munich over the holidays anyway, but not longer.

I could easily have paid the 50 RM promised to the houseboy out of my savings, which at that time were already much more, namely about 70 RM, and later through the sale of wood from my workshop, the bass viol, and other things had increased by August 1939 to about 350 to 400 RM.

The time abundantly available to me in Munich, that is, insofar as I was not in the Bürgerbräukeller, hall, and Bräustübl, I spent looking at the city. I always took my walks on foot. I made no acquaintances of any kind, not even tavern-table acquaintances, apart from the houseboy and the one-time companion whom I no longer know.

Wait, it occurs to me just now that in the Bürgerbräukeller I also spoke with three serving girls and even, at their request, took a photograph of them in the garden of the Bürgerbräukeller, a group picture. They had seen that I had a camera with me. This camera was my property; I do not know the make. I had received it from Maria Schmauder as a Christmas present in 1938.

If I am asked for what purpose I took the camera with me to Munich and whether I also photographed in the Bürgerbräukeller, I must say that I took the camera with me in order to be able to take a picture of the hall or of the pillar in question. In fact I did take several pictures inside the hall, though not during the first visit mentioned. I took one photograph of the pillar which I later blew up, from the opposite side of the gallery. I must therefore admit that during this Easter stay I went into the hall a second time. On which of the eight days of this second visit to the hall took place, I no longer know today. The hall door was open this time too, and apart from me no one was present in the hall. I could go in and out in the same way as the first time. As far as I remember, these photographs did not turn out very well. They were too dark. I had these photographs, like all the others I took, developed and printed by my photographer in Heidenheim. The photographer did not know where these photographs had been taken. I cannot remember the name of the photographer exactly. It may be that his name is Schuster.

During my stay in Munich I did not visit any other halls, rooms, and the like there where there might possibly have been an opportunity to put my plan into action.

Apart from the camera, the meter-rule, and the notebook, I took no devices or objects with me to Munich that in any way served the preparation of my plan. Nor did I have any personal luggage. I wore the suit and the underwear I had on my body. I can no longer describe today the suit that I wore at that time.

In the course of 12 April 1939 I traveled by train, whether express or passenger train I no longer know, third class, back to Königsbronn. The departure time or approximate arrival time I no longer know.

I had kept the camera until recently. I gave it, together with all my other things, to my sister in Stuttgart only on 6 November 1939.

The trip to Munich attracted no special attention insofar as I had already in March 1939 given notice at and left my position in the Heidenheim fittings factory. The reason for this resignation lay in a quarrel I had had with a foreman. This was the foreman of the apprentice department named Kastler, who on various occasions had said rude things to me which I would not put up with, because I was not subordinate to him. I was supposed to open as a priority a package that had arrived for him in the shipping department, which in my opinion was not necessary.

It was not the case that I had left this firm merely because I feared I would not be able to steal enough explosive material there. The resignation was not accepted by the works manager Koch. Koch became ill around this time and I then turned to the deputy Berschwinger, who, after repeated calls by me, handed me my papers after a few days.

During my Munich trip I therefore was not in any employment relationship. At home I had not said that I was traveling. I did not consider this necessary, because I was not on good terms with my parents and with my brother Leonhard, who had meanwhile married. I still lived in the parental house until May 1939, although according to the wish of my mother and my brother I should already have moved out in December 1938. Leonhard and his wife wanted to give the room I occupied to my mother so that they would have the entire lower floor for themselves. My father was the only one who was on my side and wanted to let me keep the chamber.

[Schnaitheim (May-4 August 1939)]

In May 1939 I then moved to Schnaitheim to the Schmauder family. In my parental house I left nothing behind. I moved everything, including my workshop equipment, to Schnaitheim. I again set up a new

provisional workshop in a basement room in the Schmauder house. My sleeping chamber there, however, was in the part of the semi-detached house belonging to Mrs. Schaad, née Schmauder, in which the Schmauder family lived.

[Auxiliary worker at Georg Vollmer's quarry in Königsbronn (April-May 1939)]

A few days after returning from Munich, that is, in mid-April or perhaps toward the end of April 1939, I took up a new job. This was in the quarry of Georg Vollmer in Königsbronn. From March, that is, from my departure from the fittings works until I began my new job at the quarry, I lived from savings from my earnings. No one referred me to Vollmer. Nor did anyone draw my attention to it. The quarry and the work in the quarry were known to me through my stay in Königsbronn. It was also known to me that blasting work was carried out there. The main reason why I applied there for work was that I could obtain powder there for the planned attack. At that time I spoke to the foreman employed there, Kolb, about work, and he at once hired me as an auxiliary worker. What I told the foreman Kolb at that time I no longer know today. Kolb was also personally known to me through my stay in Königsbronn. Kolb knew me for the same reason. In the quarry I had, as an auxiliary worker, to load stones into trolleys. About 12 to 14 men were employed in the quarry. The foreman Kolb was in charge, and he also directed the blasting work. There was also a fitter there, whose name is unknown to me, who had to carry out the necessary tool repairs. The remaining workers employed there were auxiliary workers. Of these I can name only a few. They are:

Munk, resident in Weiler, Weiss, resident in Weiler, Frank, resident in Weiler, Rieg, resident in Weiler, Maurer, resident in Ochsenberg.

Furthermore, the son of the quarry owner was also present here and there, and during the duration of his presence he supervised the work in the quarry. On average he was in the quarry six to seven hours a day. In this quarry, work was done on weekdays daily from 7:00 to 12:00 and 13:00 to 18:00. During the period of my employment there I earned 0.70 RM per hour.

The blasting work in this quarry was, as already mentioned, directed by foreman Kolb. The powder needed for the blasting was kept in a small concrete house located near the quarry. I became aware of it only through my employment in the quarry. Before that it was not known to me. The interior of the little house was approximately 1.50 meters long and 1 meter wide. The concrete house could be locked with a sheet-iron door, which was provided with an ordinary door lock. Inside the little house there was also a barred door. Whether there was a device for locking it I do not know. In this little house Kolb stored the delivered explosive material, and from this little house he always fetched the explosive material needed for the blasting. On average, blasting was done two to three times a day. But there were also days on which no blasting was carried out. Whether Kolb also kept a book about the delivered and used explosive material is not known to me.

From my workplace I could often observe when and how Kolb fetched explosive material.

[Theft of explosive cartridges and detonating caps at the Vollmer quarry (May 1939)]

Already in the first week I set about unlawfully appropriating explosive material. The first time this happened was when blasting was being carried out near my workplace. Often it was the case that Kolb had fetched more explosive material from the concrete house than was required for the blasting. How much explosive material was required for the blasting could always be determined only on the spot. He deposited the excess explosive material at places somewhat removed from the pieces to be blasted. Often these were five or eight or two explosive cartridges lying there unattended. When I had observed this, I deliberately went there and always appropriated one cartridge, which I put in my pocket. Beforehand I always made sure that no one was watching me. I did this about eight times. This was always during working hours. Apparently this theft was never noticed, for Kolb never found or mentioned anything.

In the later weeks of my employment in the quarry I also set about stealing explosive cartridges from the already mentioned concrete house at night. I did not exercise any special caution in doing so, because the quarry and the concrete house were outside the locality. At that time I carried keys with me that came from the parental property in Königsbronn and that I had taken with the tools to

Schnaitheim when I moved away. With these keys I tried to open the concrete house. There were three keys, one of which opened the lock. It did so only with great difficulty. After I had opened the door to the little house, I went inside, where I opened the already mentioned barred door, which was not locked. I switched on the flashlight I had brought with me and determined that there were two wooden boxes in the little house, about 80 cm long and 25 to 30 cm wide and approximately 35 cm high. Both boxes were opened; the lids lay beside the boxes. Both boxes had been opened and were still filled up to half with explosive cartridges. The cartridges in one box had the imprint "Donarit"; in addition a number was printed on them which is not in my memory, presumably the number I. The cartridges in the other box had the imprint "Gelantine," though I cannot state this with certainty. The cartridges were again packed in cartons of 20 to 25 pieces each and placed in the boxes in this way. On this day, when I was in this little house for the first time, I took one such package with about 20 cartridges. Whether these were Donarit or Gelantine cartridges, I no longer know. Afterward I left the little house, locked the door with the same key, and went home with the cartridges.

The interrogation is broken off at 23:20.

Signed KK Kappler. Signed KK Schmidt. Signed KK Seibold.

GEORG ELSER - BERLIN GESTAPO INTERROGATION PROTOCOL

Section 4: 22 November 1939

Working English translation from the pasted German text

Continuation of the interrogation of Elser on 22 November 1939, 9:10 a.m.

In the period that followed, I entered this little concrete hut four or five more times, likewise at night, always between 10 p.m. and 1 a.m., in the same way, and stole from it 105 explosive cartridges and, on my last visit there, 125 detonators. On each of the individual visits I took, on average, 20 to 25 cartridges. The detonators were kept in the little concrete hut in tin boxes on a board fixed to the wall. I had already noticed this during my first visits to the hut. I cannot give any special reason why I stole the detonators only on my last visit. It would certainly have been possible for me, on these visits, to appropriate a number of detonators little by little. There was one full tin and one opened tin of detonators that I took at that time.

It is correct that I knew that two or three detonators would have been sufficient for my purposes. But I thought the surplus ones would increase the explosive effect.

I carried the explosive cartridges and detonators home in the rucksack that I always had with me and kept them there in a wooden suitcase, under a false bottom. I had already made this suitcase at home during my work for master carpenter Sapper in Königsbronn. I cannot say whether my apprenticeship had already ended then. Around Easter 1939 — it may have been before or after the Munich visit — I made two secret compartments in this suitcase in Königsbronn in order to be able to store properly the explosives I had stolen. These secret compartments were placed under a wooden insert in the suitcase and could not be perceived by someone who was not initiated. I added the false bottom only in June or July 1939 in Schnaitheim, likewise in order to be able to stow the cartridges and detonators properly there. The suitcase stood in my room in Schnaitheim beside my bed. In my parents' apartment as well, this suitcase stood beside my bed. I always kept the suitcase locked, and I always carried the key with me.

It is correct that on one occasion Maria Schmauder observed me while I was putting in the false bottom. It may also have been in my room. I occasionally worked on the suitcase there. I did try to carry out this work so that no one would notice, but it could not be avoided entirely. It may be that Maria Schmauder's sister, Frau Schad, also knew about the making of this false bottom. When asked about the purpose, I answered that I wanted to keep money in it, and my drawings concerning "my invention," and other important things. They believed me, since I had already told them some time before that I was working on an invention. The making of the secret compartments, which I carried out in my workshop in Königsbronn, was not noticed by anyone.

I know nothing to indicate that the thefts of explosives and detonators from the little concrete hut at the quarry in Königsbronn were noticed in any way. At least I never heard anything about it. Some of the explosive cartridges bore the imprint "Donarit" and "Gelantine." I cannot give the exact ratio. In order to make the hut easier to open, after opening it for the first time I filed down a little the key that locked the lock of the sheet-iron door.

I myself was not employed in blasting work in the quarry. The drilling work was carried out by the foreman with one or two assistants. The foreman's name was Kolb. I no longer know the names of his assistants. This same Kolb was also the blasting master, or whatever one called it. In any case, he was responsible for the explosives and carried out the blasts. I do not know how the explosives were delivered. I could not observe that. During my work loading stones, I could observe how the blasts were prepared. I saw how, depending on the size of the rock to be blasted away, drill holes approximately one to several meters deep were driven into the rock. I also saw how the explosive cartridges were tamped into the drill hole, how the detonators were attached to the fuse, and how the blasting took place.

Although later I did not need a fuse for my act, what I had seen in the quarry did influence me somewhat.

[Incapacity for work after accident (mid-May - 22 July 1939)]

On 16 or 18 May 1939, I had an accident while working in the quarry when a stone loosened by another worker without warning fell onto my left foot. I suffered a broken bone. I did not have to go to the hospital. I was treated as an outpatient by Dr. Freund in Heidenheim. I received a plaster cast that went from below to about a handbreadth above the ankle. At home, that is, at the Schmauders', I lay mostly on the sofa. I rode to Dr. Freund in Heidenheim by bicycle, pedaling with one foot. I used this period essentially for model experiments for my device. On 22 July I was certified fit again, but I did not go back to the quarry; from then on, I lived only for the preparation of my attack. The explosives stolen up to that point seemed to me completely sufficient. I believe that while I was still ill I had already collected my papers from the quarry, that is, from the Vollmer firm.

There were also other quarries in the area, for example one in Schnaitheim. I had no special reason for choosing precisely the quarry in Königsbronn as my place of work. When I took the work, it was closest to me, since at that time I was still living with my parents in Königsbronn. It is not the case that I knew anything to the effect that precisely the foreman of this quarry was especially careless with his explosives and detonators. Nor did I have any particular friend in this quarry or at the Vollmer firm.

During my work in the quarry, and already somewhat before it, my other preparations for the attack had also progressed further. After I had obtained the measurements of the pillar through my Easter trip to Munich, I could first work out, purely by drawing, the construction of my device. On individual days I sat for hours over sketches, which I always made myself, and considered the possibility of an explosive effect, that is, what the device might look like.

Of course I already knew beforehand that one could blast with powder. I had seen this precisely in the quarry and had also observed that the explosive had to be placed as deeply as possible. In addition, I had seen that one needs detonators to ignite the explosive. Since I could not use a fuse in my attack, because I could not stand beside it in order to light it, I had to find another way to cause the detonators to ignite. Although I had never seen the inside of a rifle — nor had I seen any firearms at all in the RFB in Konstanz — I could nevertheless imagine that when a rifle is fired a spring is released and a blow is delivered against the base of the cartridge. My next thought, therefore, was to cause the ignition of the detonators with the help of rifle ammunition. I therefore went once again by bicycle from Schmauder's — I had long since sold my own — to Heidenheim, to a shop where bicycles were repaired and sold, and where sewing machines, rifles, bicycle accessories, and ammunition were sold. I do not know the name of the proprietor of this shop. I also cannot give the exact address, but I am able to describe where the shop is located. It lies in a side street off Adolf-Hitler-Strasse, very near the corner house of master turner Preiss. In this shop I simply asked for rifle ammunition. The man who served me, probably the owner, about 45 years old, short and stocky, asked me about the caliber. I then asked him to tell me what he had. He named several calibers from 6 mm to 9 mm. Thereupon, because the largest seemed best to me, I had him give me a full tin box with 25 or 50 9 mm cartridges. I no longer know what price I paid. The seller asked me neither for a hunting license nor for a weapons permit, nor for what purpose I wanted the ammunition. The cartridges he gave me had a case about 1 cm long, on which a lead ball, completely round, was seated. This purchase of ammunition took place in June or July. I cannot give the exact date more precisely.

[Blasting experiments in the parents' orchard in Königsbronn (July 1939)]

Through a practical experiment in a somewhat remote orchard in Königsbronn belonging to my parents, I established that I could cause a detonator to ignite with the help of the cartridges I had bought. For this experiment I made a model that I can draw.

Note:

The model that E. sketched is briefly described. Two wooden blocks are firmly mounted on a board. Both blocks are bored horizontally in the same direction. In these bores sits a cylindrical wooden rod, onto which a spiral spring is slipped. This spiral spring bears on one side against a fixed wooden block.

On the other side it lies against a third wooden block, which is slipped loosely over the wooden rod in a bore and can be moved between the two fixed wooden blocks. With this third wooden block, which is provided with a nail on one side, the spring can be tensioned. Opposite this nail there is, in one of the fixed blocks, another smaller bore into which the cartridge case of the rifle ammunition can be pushed, and into the same, protruding into it, a detonator. The board was firmly mounted in the garden on a wooden block; the movable block was pulled back by Elser from a greater distance with a cord, thereby tensioning the spring. When the cord was released, the block that remained on the wooden rod shot forward. The nail fastened to it struck the base of the cartridge in the manner of a rifle firing pin and caused the primer and the leaf-powder charge of the cartridge to ignite, simultaneously igniting the detonator. E. had previously removed the lead ball from the cartridge but had left in it the white powder charge pressed in leaf form.

Elser further states:

After it had gone off, I found that the one small wooden block into which I had pushed together the cartridge case and detonator had been torn apart. With that I had proof that in this way a detonator could be brought to ignition even without a fuse.

[Model and construction drawings (July 1939)]

This experiment must have taken place in July. The model, which was certainly the first model that I ever made for any sort of infernal machine or explosive charge, I built in my provisional workshop in the Schmauder house in Schnaitheim. It happened that occasionally someone entered the workshop. In such a case I always quickly pushed my workpiece, the model, under the bench and occupied myself with something else.

I forgot to mention that immediately afterward I repeated the experiment described above in the parents' garden two or three more times. I had already taken wood and drill, hammer and nails from home. Since the one small piece of wood was torn apart in the first experiment, for the following experiments I always put on another small block, drilled by me on the spot. Only when the experiment had succeeded three or four times in succession was I satisfied.

The single explosion of the detonator would not have been enough for me as proof that it could be ignited with the help of a cartridge.

After these experiments, therefore, the possible manner of ignition had become clear to me. The model that I have already described was not only the first but also the only model I needed and made for preparing my attack or for building my device. Everything else, especially the difficulties that arose for me in further considering the precise construction, I solved by drawing.

As already mentioned, in the Schmauder house I worked for hours on these plans. I made very many sketches, on which mostly only some details were being tested by me in drawing as to the possibility of their practical effectiveness. I made these sketches partly in the kitchen, partly in my room, partly in my workshop in Schnaitheim. Naturally, in doing this I was often observed, especially by family members of the Schmauder household, and also asked what I was working on, what it was supposed to become. I always explained to them that it would be "an invention." I do not think they then wanted closer details. In any case, I did not tell them any such details. Whether I ever used an excuse, I do not know.

It may be that even before May 1939, when I was still living with my parents, I had already made sketches of this kind there too; that is not impossible.

I always threw away part of the sketches I had made right away, either because they had become unnecessary or were superseded. Most of them must have been burned with wood shavings. It may be that there are still individual sketches of this kind, which I made, in the Schmauder house, that is, such as I did not take with me to Munich. That would then have been an oversight on my part.

Note:

The three hand sketches found during the search in the Schmauder apartment are shown to E. He recognizes them as having been made by his hand.

I did not deliberately destroy the above-mentioned wooden model for the firing experiments. Through the firing, the parts had already partly come apart. In this half-demolished condition I then threw the whole thing onto the plane shavings.

Whether these have since been burned I do not know. If not, then it must still be found there today. I did not throw away the spiral spring used in it, but took it with me to Munich. In carrying out the act, however, I did not use it. It must still be among my tools today. This spring came from one of several boxes of scrap iron belonging to Schmauder that stood in my workshop in Schnaitheim. I had found the spring there at that time, already badly rusted.

The most difficult problem in building or in drawing the construction of my device was to trigger the ignition at a predetermined time. From the beginning it was clear to me that I would use a clockwork for this. I had always had several movements for table clocks with chimes at home. For years I had obtained such clockworks from the firm B. Risterer in Villingen in the Black Forest. For the clockworks I had always, in my free time, made clock cases in all possible forms myself, stained them, matted or polished them, installed the clockworks, and then sold or also gave away the finished table clocks to acquaintances. I also remember that I obtained clockworks for this purpose from another firm, which, however, I cannot think of at the moment. Perhaps about four such clockworks I had taken with me when I left the Rothmund firm in Meersburg in spring 1932. When Rothmund fell into arrears with his wage payments, I asked him at least for some material in place of cash. He then gave me the four or five clockworks. In addition, I received a half-finished tall-clock case and also some other tools, which, however, had no relation at all to my later act. At that time I still had wage claims against the Rothmund firm in the amount of 176 RM. Outside the bankruptcy proceedings, Rothmund transferred these things to me in a settlement.

The manner of transferring the clock movement to my ignition mechanism I had originally imagined differently from the way I finally carried it out in the act. Originally, that is, before I went to Munich to carry out the act, I wanted to couple the movement of the clock to the ignition device with the help of a car direction-indicator mechanism and a battery, in such a way that at the determined time the stop would be lifted magnetically and thus the iron block with the ignition pins could spring forward under spring tension. I therefore took a battery and three car direction indicators, of which I would have needed only one, with me to Munich at that time. Only in Munich did I then alter my construction plan in the manner I shall describe later. All the other construction details, however, were already fixed for me in Schnaitheim by the end of July 1939.

Note:

These details of the plan are discussed further below in connection with the carrying out of the act.

Elser further states:

As already mentioned, after my broken bone in the left foot had healed, I was certified fit again by the doctor on 22 July 1939. At that time my plans concerning the attack, with the exception of the changes already indicated and later carried out, were completely finished on paper and in my head.

I wanted to move to Munich as soon as possible in order first to build my device there. I did not build the device completely in Schnaitheim because I did not want to run the risk of later having to establish in Munich that I might have built individual parts larger than I could then accommodate; that is, I first had to determine on the spot how far I could drive the cavity into the pillar, in order then to determine the dimensions of my machinery accordingly.

Actually, I wanted to be in Munich on 1 August, in order to be able to rent a room there right at the beginning of the month. But an illness intervened. I suddenly suffered fever, vomiting, and diarrhea, had to keep to bed for four days, and during this time was cared for by the Schmauder or Schad family. When I was finally able to go to Munich on 5 August, I was still half ill.

[Munich (5 August - 7 November 1939)]

Everything that I believed I needed for further preparation or execution of the act in Munich I took with me; that is, I did pack part of the extensive tool set in crates, but had it sent on to me only later. I did

the packing partly in my room and partly in my provisional workshop. Powder, explosives, and detonators filled the secret compartments and the false bottom of my wooden suitcase. The other things were packed normally. The sketches I had made, which I actually wanted to take all of, I had not hidden especially. The suitcase in which these things were kept I of course always kept locked. Whether my landlords watched me while packing, I no longer know exactly. What I had in the secret compartments and false bottom they certainly did not see. I explained to my landlords that I already had a position in Munich as a trained carpenter and for that reason was traveling there. I even named to them the name of a firm, but it was completely invented. It may be that as my future place of work I named the "Deutsche Werkstätten." As far as I still remember, I had seen this name on a furniture shop during my sightseeing visit to Munich at Easter.

As to objects and equipment that I had packed to take with me to Munich, I can still name the following from memory:

5 to 6 clockworks, of which only 3 were completely usable. I took the others along in order to be able to take from them any parts that might be necessary.

1 battery with 6 volts of voltage and 2 cells, bought in an automobile repair shop in Herbrechtingen — name? — where I went by bicycle when such a battery could not be bought in Heidenheim. The battery was used and cost about 2 to 4 RM.

3 automobile direction indicators. Of these I received one used indicator as a gift in an automobile shop in Heidenheim — name not remembered — when I said I wanted to try something with it. I likewise bought the other two from Auto-Maier in Heidenheim for a total approximate price of 1 RM. I told him as well that I wanted to try something out.

1 8 cm grenade shell, 24.5 cm high, which I had seen standing on earlier visits at the premises of a smith in Schnaitheim whose name I no longer know, and which he gave me when I told him I needed two cans that I could easily make for myself by cutting up the shell. That, of course, was not true; rather, I thought of the grenade shell from the beginning as an explosive container.

2 clock weights, which were already among the material turned over to me by the Rothmund firm in Meersburg and for which I had previously had no use. I had likewise intended these from the beginning as explosive containers.

250 pressed leaves of black powder, 19 mm in diameter, 9 mm thick, originating from the Armaturenfabrik.

150 explosive cartridges, Donarit and Gelantine, originating from the Vollmer quarry in Königsbronn.

Approximately 122 detonators, originating from the Vollmer quarry. About 3 pieces I had already used for the model experiments.

1 almost full box of the 9 mm rifle ammunition, number of pieces no longer remembered.

As tools I took with me, as far as I can still remember, the following: 1 set of planes; several chisels; 2 flat pliers; 1 wood rasp; 1 miter gauge; 1 fishplate strip; various wood drills from 3 to 18 mm; 3 hammers; 2 pincers; various files; 2 squares; 1 marking gauge; 1 bevel gauge; various iron drills from 2 to 8 mm; 1 brace; 1 to 2 masonry chisels; 1 hand saw.

The tools were packed in crates. These were sent on by the Schmauders. Clothes, linen, and other personal items were packed partly in the wooden suitcase and partly in crates. The wooden suitcase with secret compartments and so forth I personally took with me to Munich.

After all these preparations I left Schnaitheim on 5 August 1939. I traveled from there at about 2 p.m. by passenger train to Ulm and then had a connection with the express train to Munich, where I arrived at about 6 or 7 p.m. In Munich I had already rented a room from Schnaitheim. In mid-July I had placed an advertisement in writing with the Münchener Zeitung with the wording: "Gentleman seeks simply furnished room."

[Blumenstrasse 19/II with Baumann (5-31 August 1939)]

In response to this advertisement, after a few days I received 40 to 45 room offers from the Münchener Zeitung. From these offers I chose a room at random, which I got in Angertorstrasse, house number unknown, and which was offered by the Schönle family at the price of 20 RM. At that time I immediately rented this room in writing and also at the same time sent the rent for August in the amount of 20 RM. A few days later I received this 20 RM back from the Schönle family with the notice that the room had already been rented. I therefore once more placed an advertisement in the Münchener Zeitung in the same way from Schnaitheim, in response to which 5 or 6 offers were forwarded to me. Among them was also the offer of a Baumann family at Blumenstrasse 19/II, which I rented. There was no special reason for renting this room. The Baumann family was unknown to me; I did not know that Baumann was a civil servant. After my arrival in Munich I went from the main railway station in Munich to the Baumann family. At Munich main station, to transport the wooden suitcase I had brought with me, I made use of a porter, who took me there with the suitcase in a small delivery truck. For the transport I had to pay about 3 RM; the name of the porter and the license number of the delivery truck are not known to me. I was able to move into the room at Baumann's without difficulty. For the month of August Frau Baumann demanded another 30 RM rent. The monthly rent amounted in total to 35 RM. Upon questioning, in the course of time I gave the Baumann family information about my origin and my occupation. I explained to them that I was in Munich for an indefinite period and was attending a polishing course, that is, learning polishing. Furthermore, on the occasion of a conversation I told them that I was working on an invention. Although the Baumann family was interested in the invention, I made no statements or hints to them about it. I received breakfast from the Baumann family. This was charged separately. For this I had to pay 20 RM. I left the room at Baumann's very little. This was only for taking lunch, taking supper, and at the times when I was working in the Bürgerbräukeller. I paid for my living expenses from my savings; at that time I had 350 to 400 RM with me. At Baumann's I was registered with the police under my correct personal details. My nightly absences soon became noticeable to the Baumann family. Upon questioning, I told them that I was studying my invention at night and that for this reason I stayed outdoors on a bench. No further questions in this regard were asked either by Herr Baumann or by Frau Baumann. The Baumann family could not inspect my wooden suitcase, since I kept it constantly locked. I always carried the keys with me. As far as I recall, I made no sketches or drawings there. During the day I lay on the sofa most of the time. Here and there I helped Frau Baumann with housework, for example shopping, splitting wood, and the like.

[Türkenstrasse 94/II with Lehmann (1 September - 30 October 1939)]

Since the rent for the room at Baumann's was too high for me, and since I had no opportunity there for tinkering — it was a very well furnished room — I rented a room on 1 September 1939 at Türkenstrasse 94/II, with Lehmann, an upholsterer. I became aware of this room through an advertisement in the Münchener Neueste Nachrichten that I had placed there at the end of August 1939. The Lehmann family was then completely unknown to me, just as the Baumann family had formerly been. There I had a small room, for which I had to pay 17.50 RM without breakfast. There too I registered with the police under my correct personal details. To the Lehmann family as well, upon questioning, I gave information about my origin and occupation. I also told them that I was working on an invention and that I had gone to Munich for that reason. I gave no further details about this invention there either. There too I stayed in the room most of the time during the day. I likewise left this room only to take lunch and supper and to carry out the preparatory work in the Bürgerbräukeller, which was done only at night. Here and there I also went to the Baumann family, where I split wood. For this I received lunch, supper, and also some tip money. For the move I likewise made use of a porter, who is unknown to me. There too I kept my wooden suitcase constantly locked, so that no one could see inside it. The nightly absence was also noticed by the Lehmann family, but I was never questioned by them about it. I had this room until 1 November 1939. As to the fact that I was not questioned about my nightly absences, I assume that the Lehmann family were of the opinion that I was often visiting Baumann. In this room I had the opportunity for tinkering and drawing.

From Easter 1939 until my arrival in Munich in August 1939 I was not in contact with any persons in Munich. Some time after Easter — I cannot possibly give a closer date — I merely sent prints of the already mentioned photographs in the garden of the Bürgerbräukeller to a serving girl of the Bürgerbräukeller whose address I had.

I also addressed a few lines to this girl in the letter; I no longer know the contents today. Nor are the name and address of the girl known to me any longer. If I am asked whether it was Anna Ludwig, I must confirm this. After a few days this letter came back as undeliverable. Frau Härlen from Esslingen also wrote to me under this address. I had no special reason for having my mail sent poste restante. I merely wanted thereby to ensure that Maria Schmauder would have no knowledge of correspondence.

Since I was of the opinion that I had not written Ludwig's address correctly on the letter, after a few days I sent the photograph to Ludwig under the address Bürgerbräukeller. In this letter I informed her that the first mailing under the private address had come back as undeliverable. Furthermore, I asked her to convey greetings to the houseboy and to the cigar woman in the Bürgerbräukeller and to the other serving girls. Prints of the Easter photographs were also enclosed for them. I received no answer to this letter from Ludwig. I also never heard anything more from her.

In the period from Easter to August 1939 I also heard nothing more from the houseboy in the Bürgerbräukeller or from the unknown man who had at that time been present in the restaurant "Am Gasteig." The houseboy neither wrote to me, nor did I write to him. Further persons from Munich were not known to me.

I have spoken only very rarely with my childhood friend Rau since 1925. We were never in correspondence. The last time I saw him was in July 1939, when I was staying in Königsbronn to carry out the experiments on my model. I met him then with his wife — he had married in the meantime — on the street in Königsbronn and talked with him for about half an hour about general matters. I told him then that I was just visiting my father. He had no idea of my project and my intentions. He did not perceive the experiments carried out by me in Königsbronn. These were observed only by my father. I also gave my father no explanations about them. He was present at only one experiment and afterward did gardening. He had no interest in details of my work there; that is, he did not concern himself with it.

In mid-September I notified Rau in writing of my arrival in Munich and asked him to pass this on to my father. Whether he did this is not known to me. I received no answer from Rau. My father also let nothing be heard. By this I merely wanted to avoid my mother and my brother gaining knowledge of my whereabouts. I was at odds with them.

I had no further friendships at this time. I made the journey to Munich alone. On this journey also I made no travel acquaintances.

During this whole period from August 1939 to November 1939 I was in no regular employment relationship. I was occupied only with the preparatory work for my attack.

My overall plan for the act was exactly established after only a short time. Already then, in 1938, when I first resolved to commit my act, I was clear in my mind that I could not remain in Germany any longer. I wanted to be in Switzerland before my clocks triggered the explosion. I decided on Switzerland only because it seemed the nearest thing to me. In other countries, such as Italy, I would not have known my way around at all. By contrast, I knew the border crossing points to Switzerland near Konstanz very well from my several-year stay in Konstanz. At that time, however, I had not yet concerned myself with crossing the green border. I had no need to, since at that time I was in possession of a small border pass. After my illegal border crossing, after starting the clocks, I wanted to look for work in Switzerland as a carpenter or also of some other kind. When it is put to me that Jewish organizations have offered rewards for attacks on the Führer, I can only state that until today this was unknown to me. Nor did I hope to receive any advantages in Switzerland as an assassin. When I promised my sister that I would send her money from abroad, I was thinking only that such support would be easier for me in the future, since from Switzerland I naturally would no longer have paid alimony. In addition, I had the intention, and had already thought this over in detail, of writing from Switzerland to the German police at length, explaining that I was the sole guilty party in the attack and had no one who knew about it or assisted me. I would also have sent along a precise drawing of my device and a description of the execution of the act, so that my assertion could have been checked. With such a communication to the German police, I merely intended to ensure that in no case would any innocent persons be arrested in the search for the perpetrator.

I had also considered that it might under some circumstances be possible that I would be extradited from Switzerland to Germany. I wanted to guard against this by taking with me certain material that I believed would be of interest for Swiss military authorities.

During my work in the shipping department of the Armaturenfabrik in Heidenheim, I had kept, as required, a notebook concerning incoming items, for example empty powder crates that we had sent full to a particular firm. Although this book had then been provided by the firm, I took it home with me after the termination of the employment relationship, since only a few pages had been written on. Whether I had already considered then that I might later be able to use these entries, I no longer know today. When I left the firm, this notebook was not requested from me. I took this complete notebook to Munich with me on 5 August with my other things and used it there further for occasional entries. It was not, however, the same notebook as the one in which I had drawn the dimension sketch of the pillar during my Easter visit. It may be that on 5 August I already took the notebook to Munich with the thought of later being able to make use of the entries in Switzerland.

The pages that I wanted to take with me to Switzerland contained, as already indicated, entries from which it could be gathered that a number of German firms were working for German armaments. I was certain in my hope that the Swiss would not expel me if I delivered these communications to them. If they had nevertheless deported me from Switzerland, I would have asked to be transferred to France. But for that too I had no particular reason. I merely wanted to take up steady work. I do not know that the French put so-called emigrants into concentration camps. With regard to France too, I did not think of a reward. I only hoped to obtain a residence permit. If, in the event of this deportation, the Swiss had not already taken from me the communications about the German armaments firms, I would have handed these notes over to the French.

I must admit that I remember having been instructed, when joining the firm or perhaps somewhat later, about the need to keep secret any details concerning powder production. As far as I know, a slip of paper was then presented to all of us, which one had to sign. Whether anything about treason, espionage, or the death penalty stood on it, I no longer know.

I hardly reckoned with the other possibility, namely that I might not succeed in reaching Switzerland; that is, I was certain in my hope that I would succeed. If they catch me, I thought, then I must simply take the punishment upon myself.

The detonator parts found in my pocket at my arrest, which in my view were entirely insignificant, I certainly did not want to take with me to Switzerland.

(Note: These matters will be dealt with later.)

Pages 1-150 read by himself, approved, signed:

signed: Georg Elser.

Interrupted on 22 November 1939 at 7:10 p.m.

signed Kappler, signed Seibold, signed Schmidt, Criminal Commissioners.

GEORG ELSER - BERLIN GESTAPO INTERROGATION PROTOCOL

Section 5 — 23 November 1939

Working English Translation

Continued interrogation with E. on 23 November 1939, 9:00 a.m.

[30–35 Nights in the Bürgerbräukeller (August–6 November 1939)]

During my stay in Munich from 5 August to 6 November 1939, I was in the Bürgerbräukeller hall at night a total of approximately 30 to 35 times. After I had put my clothes in order and had laid out my tools, insofar as I had already brought them with me as necessary for first use, I perhaps went into the hall to work for the first time on the third or fourth night after my arrival in Munich.

On the days when I worked at night in the Bürgerbräukeller, I went each time at about 8:00 to 10:00 p.m. into the restaurant room of the Bürgerbräukeller in order to take my supper there. I regularly sat at the middle table of the restaurant room and was usually served by the waitress Berta. I ate from the menu and each time drank one glass of beer. The houseboy whom I mentioned earlier I no longer encountered in the Bürgerbräukeller at that time. According to my observations he was no longer employed in the Bürgerbräukeller then. Only later—exact time unknown—did I learn from a person no longer known to me that in the meantime he had changed his workplace. Whether the director saw me there and recognized me again is not known to me; I did not speak with him. The waitress Ludwig and the serving girl whom I had likewise photographed at Easter were also no longer employed in the Bürgerbräukeller at that time.

At about 10:00 p.m. I usually paid there. I then left the restaurant room, went from there through the cloakroom into the unlocked hall, went there by the rear staircase up to the gallery, walked along the gallery to the rear front, and hid there in a storeroom located beside the rear entrance to the gallery and screened only by a Spanish screen. In this room there were empty cardboard boxes. Similar cardboard boxes I had seen in the shooting booth located in the Bürgerbräukeller when I went several times on Sundays in October to dance entertainments there.

Whether my entering the hall was ever observed I cannot say. In the hall, at first, the emergency lighting was burning. Later, that is, after the beginning of the war, no lighting was switched on there. At that time only the light that came from the kitchen and from the cloakroom fell into it. In the hiding place just mentioned I remained until the hall had been locked. This was always sometime between 10:30 and 11:30 p.m. Before the hall was locked, Mrs. Merkel—it is the cigar-woman known to me in the Bürgerbräukeller—fed the cats staying in the hall. She did not go onto the gallery in doing so. Afterward it was locked three times; as far as I could tell from the sound, only the locking of the main entrance had taken place. Whether the emergency exit to the garden was locked I do not know. After the hall was locked, I went from my hiding place directly to the pillar, where I carried out the installation of my apparatus. Only here and there did I remain for a short time in the hiding place in order to make quite sure that no one was in the hall.

I constantly remained in the hall the whole night. The hall was opened again in the morning between 7:00 and 8:00. The hall entrance from the cloakroom and the emergency exit to the garden, located beside the taproom, were opened by a person whom I never saw. I had always finished my work between 2:00 and 3:00, and afterward, until leaving the hall, I again stayed in the hiding place already mentioned, where there was also a chair. There I dozed until leaving the hiding place.

In August 1939, after the hall was opened, I left it partly through the emergency exit to the garden. With the beginning of the war an air-raid watch was stationed in the Bürgerbräukeller. It was housed in the Alt-Münchner Saal and in the morning between 6:30 and 7:30 made coffee in the small kitchen located near the stage in the hall. Of how many men the air-raid watch consisted I cannot say. With the entry of the air-raid watch into the Bürgerbräukeller, the emergency exit mentioned was already opened at 6:00 in the morning by a person unknown to me. From that time on I left the

Bürgerbräukeller already at about 6:30. Whether I was observed by anyone in August when leaving the hall I do not know. I did see that at that time an old man was in the garden of the Bürgerbräukeller, putting the garden in order, but whether he observed me I do not know.

I know definitely that from September onward, when leaving through the emergency exit, I was seen by men of the air-raid watch. However, I was never stopped by them. These men are not known to me, nor am I able to give a description of them. When leaving the hall, in order not to make myself in any way suspicious, I took no special precautions. I always entered and left the hall only in the manner stated; I never climbed in. It sometimes happened that the hall was already locked earlier than I had expected. On those days I then immediately went home without entering the hall. I also did this when there was sometimes too lively a traffic in the cloakroom.

To and from the Bürgerbräukeller I always went on foot. I always entered it from Rosenheimer Straße and also left toward Rosenheimer Straße. That is, I left the hall toward Rosenheimer Straße only when I had gone through the cloakroom. When I used the emergency exit in leaving the hall, I left the Bürgerbräukeller through the rear exit, through the brewery grounds toward Kellerstraße. More people were present there; I never attracted attention there.

At that time I generally wore a dark-blue worsted suit with long trousers, black low shoes, and a coffee-brown pullover. From mid-September I only changed the jacket; from then on I wore a brown jacket made of a rough fabric. I wore a knickerbocker suit in Munich only when I had no work planned in the Bürgerbräukeller. This was a gray suit. From mid-October onward I also wore a gray double-breasted light overcoat that had a pleat in the back. I cannot give the cut myself. I never carried any head covering with me. I never carried bags, folders, or the like with me.

It very rarely happened that after locking and before opening the hall was entered for a short time by a person whom I never saw. It was unlocked and then locked again. The gallery was not entered in the process. What this person did in the hall I do not know. In the first week it happened once that the hall was opened—I did not see where—and that a man with a flashlight went through the hall and through the gallery. At that time I immediately kept myself hidden in my hiding place. I was not noticed by this man. My hiding place was not checked by him.

Until the beginning of the war, there were also two dogs running free in the hall, which could get into it through the rooms on the first floor. They sometimes barked, but I was never caught by them. Later I placed a chair in front of the door through which the dogs came into the hall, so that they could no longer get into the hall.

The following also occurs to me just now: In the first days in which I worked in the Bürgerbräukeller, my hiding place was once entered by a man after the hall had been opened, precisely at the moment when I was about to leave the hiding place. This man wanted to fetch a cardboard box from my hiding place and noticed me in doing so. After he had taken a box, he went away without saying anything to me and then came back onto the gallery with the director. The man came there from the left and the director from the right. In the meantime I had left my hiding place and had taken a seat at a table on the eastern gallery, where, for form's sake, I was writing a letter. When questioned by the director, I told him that I had a boil on my thigh which I wanted to squeeze out. When he asked what I had been doing in the rear room, I told him that I had wanted to open the boil there. I also told him that I wanted to write a letter at the table. The director merely told me to write the letter in the garden, since I had no business being on the gallery. I then went into the garden of the Bürgerbräukeller, where, in order not to arouse suspicion, I drank coffee. It was the same director with whom I had already spoken there at Easter 1939. Whether he recognized me again I do not know. The person who saw me in the hiding place is the Kreuzer who became known to me after my arrest at a confrontation.

Note:

For better understanding of the interrogation transcript regarding the manner of carrying out the deed and the construction of the infernal machine, or its mode of operation, drawings 1–5 are appended to this transcript. The entries made in red pencil were made by one of the interrogating officials, Criminal Commissar Kappler. All other inscriptions are by Elser himself. In the drawing of the complete installation, which Elser made at natural scale, the original was left unchanged and only a blueprint of it

was provided with the red-pencil indications.

Drawing 1 represents the previously mentioned trial model with which Elser tested whether, with the help of a rifle cartridge, a detonating cap could be ignited by the impact of a pin upon it. Drawing 2 represents a perspective section from the pillar that E. loaded. Drawing 3, a blueprint, gives an overview of the installation, the fitting into the pillar, and the construction of the infernal machine. On drawing 4 E. set out more precisely the mode of operation of his apparatus. While in this picture, besides the exact representation of three important individual parts, the mechanism is drawn in the tensioned, that is, not yet released state, drawing 5 represents the same mechanism in the released state, that is, as the apparatus would have looked after ignition if it had not been destroyed by the explosion.

Elser therefore went to work in the hall on the first night of his stay there, at the beginning of August 1939, with the smaller tools provisionally required, which he carried in his clothing pockets.

Elser states in this regard:

First I carefully loosened the wooden strip on the base molding of the wooden paneling on the pillar, then the upper profile strip on the wooden paneling; that is, from the baseboard I had to cut away the profile strip milled onto the upper part of this board, which therefore had consisted of one piece with the rest of the board. The upper profile strip was only a molding which I could remove without difficulty. In this way I could saw out part of a board of the pillar paneling so that after replacing the moldings no saw-cut marks were visible. I converted this cut-out board into a door by making it turnable in the pillar angle by means of a dowel hinge fitted at the top and bottom. The other long side of the door board did not attract attention because it coincided with a natural joint, onto which profile strips had been milled everywhere. On the inside of this door I installed a bolt. I could open this bolt without removing any moldings or profile strips, each time with a flat knife which I could insert into the natural vertical joint. Drawing 3 shows this bolt and also the position of the door. Drawing 2 shows the type of wall paneling and the location of the door. Naturally, in order to be able to move the bolt from outside, I had to cut away the so-called tongue, that is, the projecting part on the neighboring board, which projected under the profile strip of the dismounted board into that board.

I needed about three nights to make the door. In this way, however, I could always begin my work immediately once I had opened the door, and after finishing a night's work I needed only to close the door in order completely to conceal activity inside the pillar. Even if someone had examined the pillar very closely by day, he would have noticed no alteration on it. My work place was not obstructed by tables or chairs, though such stood directly beside it.

I carried out the further work on the pillar, which had been built of bricks, with chisel, brace, and chisel-drill. In order later to be able to work the stones, that is, break them out, I bought a mason's chisel in Munich in a tool shop for 0.30 marks. I no longer know the name of this shop, and I cannot describe its location either. I would, however, find this shop again. For this chisel I later had three additional extension pieces welded on, one after the other, by the locksmith Solleder at Türkenstraße 59. In addition I also needed a special chisel for breaking out side joints. I had this chisel newly made according to my instructions by the locksmith Solleder just mentioned. I no longer know the price for this manufacture.

First I had to remove the plaster that lay over the brick. This went rather easily. I was finished with it in one night. I could remove the bricks only by drilling holes close together into the brick joints filled with hard mortar, by means of brace and chisel-drill, breaking out the remaining mortar with the chisel, and then breaking out the bricks piece by piece with a longer chisel, used as a lever. Since the mortar contained rather coarse stones which, every time the drill struck them, made a real cracking sound, in order to damp the sound somewhat I wrapped a piece of cloth around the rear part of the drill and pressed it firmly against the stone during the work. I wanted thus to block the sound somewhat, since the smallest sound in the empty hall at night echoed rather strongly.

In general I had to proceed very carefully, and that is why the work took so long. With every breaking action and every turn of the drill I had to take care to make as little noise as possible. If, for example, I had to break out a stone, which always made the greatest noise, I always waited until the absolute

silence was interrupted by some external noise. It was very useful to me that approximately every ten minutes the automatic flushing began in the toilet installations of the Bürgerbräukeller. I had to wait for this noise, which lasted a few seconds, use it for the work, and then wait again with further activity until the flushing apparatus next interrupted the silence.

In the manner described above, over the course of the months—I was not finished with the masonry work until the end of October—I broke out from the pillar the space shown in drawing 3. The deeper I penetrated into the pillar, the slower it naturally went. I had to work with an extended chisel and, for clearing out rubble, with a scraper I had made myself.

Note:

The measurements given by E. concerning the cavity created in the pillar are to be taken from the original drawing made by him at natural scale and, insofar as height measurements are concerned, are entered in drawing 3 for the individual parts of the space.

Elser continues:

The rubble, drill dust, and stones produced in breaking out I caught in a bag I had made myself from my own towel, into the opening of which I had drawn a stiff wire. With the wire ring I could clamp the bag into the opening, where it then always stood open during the work and could catch the rubble. When the bag was full—it was relatively small—I emptied the contents into a cardboard box that could be closed with a cardboard lid. I always left this box in my hiding place on the gallery among the other boxes standing there. Only when it was full did I go at midday with a hand suitcase from Kellerstraße through the rear entrance into the hall, go into my hiding place, and pour the contents of the cardboard box into the suitcase. Then I left the hall by the same way with the suitcase and went on foot with it to the grounds behind the Volksbad, where I emptied the suitcase in the high-water bed of the Isar beside a pile of rubble located there. Then I went home again. I could enter the hall unhindered.

In this way I carried the rubble produced by my work out of the Bürgerbräu about two or three times. Although men of the air-raid watch were in the hall, I do not believe that I was observed in any way. The suitcase was an ordinary brown vulcanized-fiber suitcase, my property, which I had at home. Once I also carried the rubble out of the Bürgerbräukeller in a piece of my blue work apron by the same route.

Later I lined the door mentioned in the wooden paneling on the inside with a 2 mm-thick sheet of iron, which I bought in a locksmith's shop known to me neither by name nor by exact location. Personally, I would find my way back to this locksmith. This sheet had several purposes: it was intended to prevent a hollow space from being suspected when it was tapped. In addition, I wanted to avoid the possibility that my clockworks standing behind it might be damaged by a nail accidentally driven in at that point. I had in fact observed that very near it a nail had been driven into the wooden paneling, presumably for purposes of occasional decoration. I cut the bolt mentioned for this door from the same piece of sheet metal, made it myself, and installed it.

The dowel hinges used for the door, as a substitute for hinges, I bought as a commercially available accessory in an ironmonger's shop in the Tal, approximately 300 meters south of the town hall in Munich.

As long as I was occupied with the masonry work, I hid the tools needed for it in the cavity itself. Only in the first days, when the necessary space for that was not yet available, did I put them under one of the various boxes present in my hiding place.

During the whole period I wore blue work trousers pulled over my street clothes for my activity in the hall. In the mornings I always put the trousers in a corner of the room where the boxes stood, in which I occasionally hid. Once my activity could actually have been discovered, because shortly before the event on 8 November 1939, during my absence in the daytime, the room mentioned was cleared out and all the boxes were taken away. When I came one evening, the room was empty. I was already frightened, but found my work trousers neatly folded in a corner. I nevertheless worked that night, but no longer left the trousers outside; instead I always put them into the pillar cavity as well.

The suit, which had been worn for several years already and which I always wore during my night work, I did not clean specially. It did not become dirty, since I had taken off the jacket and had pulled work

trousers over the trousers.

During all my activity, both in breaking out and later in installing my apparatus, I always used a flashlight which I had covered with a blue handkerchief.

To say everything, I must also mention that right at the beginning of my activity, to the left of the space for the clockworks, I suddenly came upon a cavity whose significance I did not know, whether it was some kind of shaft. To be on the safe side, I set the stone opened up at this place back in and plastered the opening. The plaster used at that time and left over I calmly left in my hiding place. I thought perhaps someone might make use of it someday. Later, after my arrest, it was shown to me by the police.

Any remaining rubble or dust that had fallen beside the bag I always cleaned up very carefully. For this I used a cloth or handkerchief.

[Construction of the Bomb (August–October 1939)]

At the same time I also built my apparatus. While I worked at night in the hall of the Bürgerbräukeller, during the day I occupied myself with the final exact construction of my machine and its assembly.

I was able to carry out the conversion and housing of the clockworks soon after my arrival in Munich. With the construction of the other parts I had to wait until I knew how far I could drive the space into the pillar. I could therefore determine the exact size relations of my entire apparatus only at the beginning of October 1939. The details, especially the mode of operation of my construction, were already clear to me beforehand. The idea of triggering the ignition by means of magnetic action, battery and automobile indicator, I had already abandoned earlier, though only in Munich.

The infernal machine was constructed and functioned as follows: On the small hand, the hour hand, of a clock I had fastened the advance lever D. The lever D lay behind the dial, not in front of it. On a special axle, which I had added, I had mounted a self-made wooden comb wheel, made of plywood with beechwood pins, and had inserted it into the frame of the clockwork in such a way that every twelve hours the lever D carried along one of the twelve pins B and thereby turned the comb wheel A by one-twelfth of a revolution. On the comb wheel A I had also attached a stop C projecting to the side, which at a time to be calculated in advance, in relation to the running of the clock, raised a curved lever E that was mounted at point F. When this lever, which was already present in the clock and actually served to release the striking mechanism, was raised, the clock striking mechanism was released through the positions G and the little wheel H. The spring of the striking mechanism could run down. The toothed wheel J, likewise already present in the clock, turned, and indeed relatively slowly and with corresponding power. This wheel J drove the small toothed wheel H which I had fitted, which was firmly connected with a small cable drum, and thus wound up the 0.8 mm wire cable soldered on at K, running over pulleys L1 and L2. In this way the locking bolt N, which was loosely held between the pulleys M, was pulled away in front of pulley O.

When pulley O became free, lever P, which turned around Q and was under the tension of spring V, could spring away. The other end of this lever released the long end of lever R, which turned around S. Lever R, which with its short curved end had until then held the iron striker block in a slot before which there still stood a web, released this block, which was under spring tension. The block, with the three firmly inserted and sharpened nails W, sprang forward on bolt Ü, over which it was loosely mounted, under the force of spring V. The points W struck the cartridge cases opposite—rifle ammunition without lead bullets—and by impact on the primers of the cartridges ignited the detonating caps Y inserted with a small space after them. These detonating caps Y projected with their free end through corresponding holes in the lid into the explosive containers. As such containers there were a grenade shell and a former clock weight. The third detonating cap led into a simple explosive cartridge. Another clock weight, filled with explosive material and likewise provided with a simple drilled lid, was placed free in the space beside the explosive container. From the hole in the lid a detonating cap projected freely, which was supposed to be ignited by explosive transfer from the iron explosive cartridge.

Since I did not want to leave it to the reliability of a single clock whether my plan succeeded or not, I installed the same arrangements already described on the first clock also on a second clock. The wire

cable coming from the second clock I likewise led over pulley L2 to bolt N and fastened it there. Shortly before pulley L2 I clamped the two wire cables together. For the same reason of double or triple safety, I also did not pack the explosive material into only one container and ignite it with only one detonating cap and only one primer, but had three firing pins act on three primers and on three detonating caps.

Corresponding to the twelve combs B of comb wheel A, I could therefore set each of the two clocks, which in themselves had a running duration of fourteen days, 144 hours or six days in advance, to the time of the explosion, approximately to within a quarter of an hour, and set them going. By testing I could even have made the setting six days in advance accurate to the minute.

Since I found that the two clockworks would be clearly audible through the wall paneling, I housed them in a double-walled box made of plywood with a 1 cm-thick cork insert. The cork insert was a special mixture of tar, cardboard, and cork, to which I had become attentive through a newspaper advertisement by a firm for sound insulation and heat and cold technology. I went into the office noted in the newspaper in Wendel-Dietrich-Straße in Munich and had explained to me what materials there were for sound insulation. I told the man that at home I had a clock that ran too loudly for me at night and that therefore I wanted to build a soundproof case. He then sold me the required area of the material mentioned in sheet form. For approximately five sample sheets about 40 by 20 cm in size I paid about 1 RM. The two clocks stood in a box closed on all sides, out of which only the wire cables led through two small holes. In the space I fastened this clock box by means of two sheet-iron flanges, that is, sheet-metal strips I had made myself, partly to the wooden paneling and partly to a remaining lath which had previously lain under the plaster.

The explosive containers and also the housing consisting in one half of wood and in the other half of sheet metal as a lid, in which the release device, the tension spring, and the iron striker block were housed, and in whose lid the cartridge cases and detonating caps were inserted, I did not fasten specially in the space. On the other hand, the housing just mentioned and the grenade shell, which in turn was connected with one of the clock weights by an iron band, were firmly connected with each other by two sheet-metal strips, riveted on one side and screwed tight on the other.

As already mentioned, the clocks had been in my possession for some time. The comb wheels A for each of these two clocks I made myself. The small toothed wheel K, which I attached to both clocks, comes from another clockwork. I had after all brought five or six clockworks with me to Munich. The pulleys L1, L2, M, and O I had turned from iron according to my instructions by the turner Wechsler in Munich, Frauenstraße. In the course of time I also had the following parts made or worked on by this craftsman:

Bolt N, the axles for the various pulleys, bolt U, the drillings in block T, axle Q, as well as the axle for comb wheel A, twice, the lid with thread for the grenade shell, the lids with thread for the two clock weights, and axle B.

For everything together I paid the turner Wechsler approximately 18 RM. I had told him that I wanted to try something out.

In an open shop for wire cables, hemp ropes, and so on, I bought the two 0.8 mm wire cables used. I do not know the name of the proprietor. The shop lies in a street parallel to the Tal. Note: according to the description it is probably Lederstraße. I bought nothing else there. Price: approximately 6 to 10 pfennigs.

[Components from Solleder, Brög, and Others (August–October 1939)]

At the locksmith Solleder's I had the following parts made or worked on: the 15 mm-thick rectangular lid with three holes and a broad rim made of strong sheet iron for the housing, half wood and half sheet metal, of the ignition apparatus; the soldering of the wire cable onto axle K for one clock—for the other clock this was not necessary, since there I could fasten it well without soldering; the flat-iron frame around the grenade shell with three holes, one of them threaded. Price: approximately 5 RM.

In addition, as already mentioned, I also had Solleder lengthen my chisel three times in the course of the months by welding on new pieces, and I also had him make a special chisel for side joints. Price: approximately 1 RM.

At the firm Suckfüll, ironware shop, in Munich, Türkenstraße, I bought the following parts ready-made: spring V, two screw bolts with nuts, and a threaded screw for the flat-iron frame and the band iron on the explosive containers. Price approximately 20 to 30 pfennigs.

A number of smaller screws I bought in a screw-specialty shop near the Viktualienmarkt, name and exact location of the shop no longer known to me, for an approximate price of about 1 RM.

In the foundry and ironware shop Kustermann in Munich, Rosenheimer Straße, I had block T with the necessary slot cast according to my instructions, without drilling. For safety's sake, that is, in case a casting cracked or I otherwise damaged it, I had three pieces made at once for an approximate price of 4 to 5 RM. I was not asked for what purpose I needed this piece.

I had the two clock weights bored out in a turning shop and locksmith's shop near Baderstraße; the house lies beside an old mill, and beside it is the workshop of a brass turner. There I also had an internal thread cut into the openings of each of the two clock weights. Price no longer remembered.

The raw iron, solid round iron, for the two lids of the clock weights, which I later had turned and threaded, which, as already mentioned, Wechsler did, I bought in a screw shop, office sale and workshop, in Reichenbachstraße, rear building. Name no longer remembered. Beside the house there is a safe business. Price approximately 0.80 RM.

The raw iron, solid round iron, for the lid of the grenade shell, which Wechsler later likewise further worked, by turning down and cutting a thread, I bought in a machine factory whose name I no longer know, but which lies on the Glockenbach. Wechsler had sent me there because he did not have such strong round iron as I needed for this purpose. In the factory, just as in the other shops in which I bought any part, I was not asked what I needed it for. For the raw iron I paid approximately 1.30 RM.

Other firms or craftsmen, apart from those mentioned so far, I did not make use of, insofar as I can remember.

The levers P and K I cut myself from remnants of the door fitting sheet and shaped them. The nails W I drilled into block T by hand and upset them somewhat in the holes. The drillings in the lids of the grenade shell and the two clock weights for the detonating caps I made myself with the brace. The housing for the ignition apparatus, consisting of a wooden trough as the lower part and a sheet-metal lid as the upper part, I made myself from my own wood and remnants of the door sheet. All the other parts needed for my apparatus I also built myself.

I carried out this work in the carpenter's workshop of master carpenter Brög, Türkenstraße 59. I had to pay nothing for it. Master carpenter Brög, who works alone, was making a heavy cabinet precisely at this time. I always helped him with this, especially in taking down and setting up the individual heavy parts. I also helped with delivering the cabinet to the client. I was not connected with Brög, whom I had not previously known, by any special friendship. He was a good man and very accommodating. Later, from 1 to 6 November, I even stored my things in his workshop free of charge and also slept a few nights in the workshop; that is, naturally more by day than by night. In the course of time Brög naturally asked me more often what I was working on or what I needed one thing or another for. I always told him it was to be an invention. To his further questions I told him that for the time being it was secret. To a later question by Brög as to whether what I was making was a clockwork which, when waking one in the morning, also switched on the light at the same time, I said: "Yes, something like that."

[Installation of the Bomb (November 1939)]

When I had assembled everything and had tested the individual parts, including the clocks, several times for their effectiveness and functioning, naturally without inserting primers and detonating caps or even explosive material, on the evening of 1 or 2 November—I no longer know exactly—I filled the explosive containers, the grenade shell and the bored-out clock weights, at home with the explosive material, that is, only with the black powder, screwed on the lids, inserted the detonating caps into the holes, packed these explosive containers and the ignition apparatus in its housing into my hand suitcase, and thus brought them into the Bürgerbräu hall. At that time I entered the hall from Kellerstraße through the rear entrance door known to me, which was usually not locked and which could be locked only from inside with a padlock. From there I went up to the gallery on the rear

staircase. This was about 10:00 or 11:00 p.m. At that time no lights were burning in the hall. No persons were present there.

I packed the suitcase in the storeroom next to Brög's workshop. There I had stored my wooden suitcase, in which until then explosive material and so on had still been locked away in the double bottom and secret compartments. No one was present in the storeroom at that time. This was done after closing time. I was in possession of a key to the storeroom which Brög had handed over to me, without my asking, when I stored my things there. I gave this key back to Brög only on 6 November, when I left Munich. I was also not observed by anyone when carrying away the suitcase.

On the gallery of the Bürgerbräukeller hall, under the light of my flashlight covered with a blue handkerchief, I opened in the usual way the door to the cavity created by me. Into the rearmost corner of this cavity, see drawing 3, I first placed the grenade shell, around which at home I had already drawn the band-iron frame. On the grenade shell I had also already fastened at home with a sheet-metal strip, not drawn in, one of the filled clock weights, so that this second explosive container lay on the grenade shell. By means of the flat iron with two screw bolts and nuts and the threaded screw, the square lid with the broad slip-on frame of the ignition apparatus housing had also already been fastened through the sheet-metal strips. As a further piece I then joined the entire housing of the ignition apparatus by inserting the wooden trough together with the sheet-metal lid into the slip-on frame. Then, as drawn, I placed the second filled clock weight loose beside the other explosive containers on the floor of the cavity. The striker device, which I call the ignition device, was of course cocked and held by bolt N through levers R and P.

The work on this evening took about two hours. I spent the rest of the night in the Bürgerbräu hall in my old hiding place. I left the hall the next day at about 6:30 by the rear exit toward Kellerstraße. I spent the night in the Bürgerbräukeller because I could no longer have entered Brög's storeroom owing to the passage there being locked. I carried the suitcase with me again. I also remained unobserved on my return to the storeroom. I did not have to pass through the workshop in order to get into the storeroom.

The leftover black powder that had not fit into the containers, my entire supply of 104 explosive cartridges, as well as the remaining approximately 119 detonating caps and the remaining part of rifle ammunition, no longer numerically ascertainable, together with the lead bullets, I packed that day, that is, on 2 November, as I now remember exactly, in the evening in Brög's storeroom, where no one was present, into my hand suitcase and brought it from Kellerstraße through the rear entrance of the Bürgerbräukeller. For safety's sake I had wrapped several cartridges, several caps, and rifle ammunition at a time in newspaper and placed them thus in the suitcase.

On the gallery of the hall I again opened the door I had created, first pushed several packets of the black-powder tablets into a cavity under the ignition apparatus, then placed the detonating caps in the space between the grenade shell and the wall, and finally filled the whole remaining rear space of the cavity with the explosive cartridges together with the remaining rifle ammunition. Since I knew from the outset that I would not succeed in filling this rear cavity by hand, I had previously made myself from wood an approximately 50 cm long spoon-like pair of tongs. This too was done in Brög's workshop. Before and during its use Brög did not see these tongs, at most perhaps afterward, since after use I left them lying in the workshop, where they may perhaps still be today. With these tongs I succeeded in filling even the smallest and last cavity in the rear part of the hollow space with explosive cartridges. Finally the entire space, including above the ignition apparatus, with the exception of the space needed for my clock box, was completely filled with explosive materials.

In the meantime, already on the evening of 2 November, it may perhaps have been around 8:00 p.m., I had set the two clocks to the correct time and set them going. It was not necessary to set the clocks going at about the same hour at which, six days later, they were to trigger the ignition mechanism. Since the stop C was mounted once and for all on the comb wheel in such a way that, if my clocks agreed with the normal time, ignition was possible only either at 9:30 in the morning or at 9:30 in the evening, it did not matter at what hour on 2 November, between 10:30 in the morning and approximately 9:00 p.m., I set the clocks going. I had long before determined by tests the correct position, for this time, of the attachment of stop C between two pins B.

The night from 2 to 3 November 1939, after I had filled in my explosive material, I likewise spent in my hiding place until about 6:30. In leaving the hall I again used the rear entrance and went through the brewery grounds to Kellerstraße into the open. Here I remained unobserved.

On the evening of 3 November I then packed the clocks in wrapping paper, which I tied with cord, and wanted to bring them from Brög's storeroom into the Bürgerbräukeller. But since I could not get into the hall—the rear entrance used by me was locked that evening—and since it was also not possible for me to spend the night in Brög's storeroom because the passage was locked at night, I remained at night in the garden of the Bürgerbräukeller, where I stayed under a roof where the beer barrels are stored. Early, at 5:30, I then went back to Brög's storeroom; I had the clock with me. At home I assured myself that nothing on the clock had been disturbed.

On 4 November 1939 at about 9:30 p.m., I went with the clocks, which I had again packed in the same way, to the Bürgerbräukeller. Since I knew that that evening, a Saturday, there was a dance event in the hall, I entered the Bürgerbräukeller from Rosenheimer Straße, bought an admission ticket, went into the hall and onto the gallery, where I deposited the clocks I had brought along in my hiding place.

I took a seat on the gallery, near the music platform, and from there watched the dance event. I had no company. At the end of the dance event—it was on 5 November at about 1:00 a.m.—I went from my seat into my hiding place and waited there until the hall had been emptied and locked. By waiting for about another half hour I satisfied myself that there was actually no one left in the hall. I then wanted to install the clocks in the pillar, but had to determine that the front space where the housing was to be inserted was too narrow. Although I had broken out the front space further, I did not succeed in inserting the clock housing. I therefore closed the door again, packed my clock again, and waited in my hiding place for daybreak. In the morning I left the hall through the side emergency exit by the kitchen, which in the meantime had been opened. I went through the brewery grounds to Kellerstraße and from there into Brög's storeroom. There I rounded off the rear corners of the clock box by sawing and rasping. According to my estimate, the clock box therefore had to fit into the front space of the cavity in the pillar of the Bürgerbräu hall.

[Conclusion of the Work (5 November 1939)]

On Sunday evening, 5 November 1939, between 9:00 and 10:00 p.m., I went again with the packed clock housing to the Bürgerbräu, which I also entered that day from the main entrance in Rosenheimer Straße, since on that day too a dance event was taking place in the Bürgerbräu hall. This time too I bought an admission ticket and went onto the gallery, where I watched the event from the same place as the day before, after I had again deposited the housing in the hiding place. At the end of the dance event I again waited in my hiding place until the hall had been emptied and locked. I was not observed by anyone in doing so. On this day the dance event had already ended at about midnight.

After about one hour I went with the clocks from my hiding place to the pillar, opened the door, and by inserting the clock housing into the front space of the cavity established that it now fit. I fastened the clock housing, as indicated, with sheet-metal strips. Afterward I introduced the wire cables, which, as already mentioned, I had lightly clamped together near their ends, into the eye of the retaining bolt N and fastened them by twisting together the free end. The wire cables were thus lightly tensioned.

Finally I had still to set the two clocks going again, since they had of course stopped during transport, and to set the time on these clocks correctly again by comparison with a pocket watch. For this purpose I opened the front side of the clock box, which as a precaution I had likewise made as a door, closed it again later, and thereby let the matter take its course.

I had forgotten to mention and to enter on the drawings that, for these purposes of transport, in the last days of construction I had installed a safety screw. This safety screw, fixed with nuts, prevented, in case bolt N shifted during transport, lever P from springing back and thus prevented a triggering of the ignition mechanism. Naturally I had to loosen this safety screw after I had connected the wire cables, before I wanted to close the outer door for the last time.

I was finished with this work on 6 November 1939 at 6:00 in the morning. Afterward I remained in my hiding place for about another half hour and then left the hall through the side emergency exit by the

kitchen, which in the meantime had been opened. I left the grounds of the Bürgerbräukeller through Kellerstraße, went to Isartorplatz, where at the kiosk located there I drank one or two cups of coffee, and from there went to Brög's storeroom in order to put my things in order there for departure.

As I have already stated earlier, I had learned already in autumn 1938 that these events take place every year in Munich on 8 and 9 November and that the leadership participates in these celebrations. I suppose that I got this knowledge from the daily newspapers. It is also possible that I learned it in some other way. I can no longer remember. It was not known to me that cancellation of these celebrations was planned this year, nor did I know that originally the Führer was not supposed to participate in this celebration. I neither read anything about this nor heard anything about it. During my stay in Munich I read newspapers only rarely; for this I had almost no time. I cannot recall whether I read a daily newspaper in November 1939.

[Moving Out from the Lehmann Family (1 November 1939)]

At the beginning of October 1939 I was bedridden for several days. For unknown reasons my right knee had then suppurated. Because of this I was under medical treatment for about two or three weeks with the practical physician Dr. Hauer in Wörthstraße. This illness prevented me for some time from carrying out work in the Bürgerbräukeller. I was cared for at that time by my landlady Lehmann.

I gave up the room at Lehmann's on 1 November 1939, since a longer stay in Munich was no longer in question for me. If I had known that my preparatory work in the Bürgerbräukeller was not yet finished on 1 November, I would have remained living there longer. On 15 October I had given notice to Lehmann. I merely told her that I would go home again. It may be possible that they asked whether I was finished with my inventions; I no longer know this definitely. If this was the case, I certainly answered yes.

My things stored at Lehmann's I myself took away from Lehmann's on 1 November with Brög's two-wheeled handcart and, with Brög's agreement, put them in his storeroom. I had told Brög that I had given notice at Lehmann's for 1 November, but that I could not go home until a few days later. I gave no reason. At my request he permitted without further ado the things to be stored in his storeroom. For this, as already mentioned, he also handed me a key.

My laundry, clothing, and my tools I had already packed at Lehmann's in three crates and brought to the railway on 1 November, where on 2 November I sent them to my sister Maria in Stuttgart. Thus I still had with me only the wooden suitcase in which there were items of my clothing.

[Stuttgart (6–7 November 1939)]

On 6 November 1939 I left Munich. After 10:00 I departed by passenger train from the main station in Munich to Ulm, changed there into an express train, and continued to Stuttgart. I had an immediate connection. I wore a gray-blue suit with long trousers, a black-gray double-breasted coat, and a gray hat with a black band. As hand luggage I carried the brown traveling suitcase and two packages with me; the wooden suitcase I had checked as travel luggage. I told Brög that I was going home. I thanked him for his accommodation, and he also thanked me for the help I had given him with the work.

I cannot recall that during my stay in Munich I came into contact with any persons other than those named.

[Houseboy Renner]

The houseboy Renner and the waitress Ludwig I likewise never saw during this time. I also never heard anything more from them. During my stay in Munich I received post only from Georg Schmauder and Mrs. Härlen; that is, the letters were not written by Georg, but by Ruth. It was an insignificant correspondence. The letters from Härlen were love letters. Furthermore, as already mentioned, I sent a letter to my sister Maria in Stuttgart, to which she answered me in Munich. I received no poste restante mail in Munich.

The only post office to which I had poste restante mail sent was in Heidenheim. When I moved to Munich in August I did not submit a forwarding request there. At least, despite the statements of the postal officials in Heidenheim being put to me, I cannot with the best will remember it. During my then

stay at home I did not have Mrs. Härlen, who wrote me approximately once every three weeks, send the post home to me because I did not want Maria Schmauder, and earlier my parents, to know that I was still in contact with the woman who had been divorced because of me. During the time when I was no longer employed in the Heidenheim armature factory, I repeatedly, on visits to Heidenheim by bicycle, asked at the post office there whether anything had come in for me. Apart from the letters from Mrs. Härlen, under the poste restante address I also received fairly regular mailings from a lottery business in Hamburg, with which I had for some time been playing an eighth share in the state lottery. In this lottery, by the way, I mostly came out about even. A few times I won back the stake, other times 15 RM, 30 RM, and 38 RM.

It occurs to me, incidentally, that I also received other letters poste restante in Heidenheim. When, still employed in the Heidenheim armature factory, I was already considering moving to Munich in some time, I thought that under certain circumstances the labor office might cause me difficulties in giving up my position in Heidenheim. Today it is indeed the case that one cannot simply take work somewhere else whenever one wants. For this reason, and only for this reason, I had at that time placed by letter in the Münchener Neueste Nachrichten a marriage advertisement with the content that a gentleman was seeking a young lady or widow with her own apartment. I was not thinking of actually marrying, or even of later taking a bride with me to Switzerland. I merely wanted, if I should have difficulties with the labor office because of my move to Munich, to be able to show some letter from which it would emerge that I intended to marry a woman in Munich who had an apartment there, in which we both could live.

At that time I actually received two letters which had come in under cipher at the newspaper. As a precaution I answered both letters. Both women, whose names I definitely no longer know, wrote back to me. But then I did not answer anymore because in the meantime I had learned that no difficulties would be made for me in the intended move to Munich, and with that the matter became meaningless for me. The correspondence on my part took place under the address: Georg Elser, poste restante Heidenheim. A letter from the advertising department of the newspaper also came in to me under the poste restante address in this matter.

[Karl Kuch]

Other mailings apart from those mentioned above I never received poste restante, neither in Heidenheim nor anywhere else. If I am asked in this connection whether I knew a certain Kuch in Königsbronn, I can only say that he was known to me only by name and from his automobile accident, in which he, I believe with his wife, was fatally injured. I do not think I ever saw him. In any case I never spoke with him.

No letters were later forwarded to me from the Heidenheim post office. I would not have known from whom, since I was no longer playing in the state lottery, and I had informed Mrs. Härlen of my move to Munich with the statement of the address there. What I told Mrs. Härlen at the time about the reason for moving to Munich does not occur to me. The true reason, in any case, I did not tell her.

In Stuttgart on 6 and 7 November 1939, as already stated, I stayed with my sister Maria. The statements that I already made about this visit in connection with the statements about the relations with my siblings are still remembered by me and correspond to the facts. These statements have just been read to me. I still maintain them today. I have nothing more to add to them.

[Munich (7–8 November 1939)]

As already mentioned, I had formed the decision to travel back to Munich once more already a few days earlier, namely already in Munich before I went to Stuttgart. Under all circumstances, since I had finished installing the clock so late, namely two days later than I had originally believed, I wanted to look once more to see whether the clock perhaps had stopped after all. After setting up the clocks on 6 November 1939, after I had set them going again and adjusted them, I had only another half hour before I had to leave the hall of the Bürgerbräukeller again. I wanted, however, to be sure, and therefore I traveled to Munich once more.

In order to be able to undertake the journey to Munich, I asked my sister Maria on 7 November for the loan of 15 RM, whereupon she gave me 30 RM as a gift. Of all my savings I had at this time only 10 RM

left. During my stay in Munich these had been used up, except for the 10 RM, by the cost of living and the purchase of the objects for my apparatus. I had no earnings in Munich. Apart from the tip from Mrs. Baumann, I received no contributions from anyone. Nor were any such promised to me by anyone.

On 7 November 1939 at about 4:00 p.m. I traveled by express train from Stuttgart to Munich, where I arrived at the main station at about 9:00 or 9:30 p.m. I wore the same clothing as on the journey to Stuttgart. I was alone and made no travel acquaintances. I carried with me only a pair of pliers, the folding knife, and the things that were found on me at my arrest. These things I had hidden in the pockets of my clothing. In addition I had one package in which there was about half a pound of sausage.

From the main station in Munich I went directly to the Bürgerbräukeller. I rode there by streetcar. It was about 10:00 p.m. when I arrived there. Through the main entrance in Rosenheimer Straße I went through the cloakroom into the hall, which was empty and unlit. I did not notice that I was observed by anyone in doing so. I saw no one. The hall door was not locked. In the hall I went immediately onto the gallery and listened at the door of the pillar to see whether the clockworks were still running. By pressing my ear to the door I could hear the ticking of the clocks very faintly. Then I opened the doors with the folding knife, opened the door to the clock housing, and satisfied myself with my pocket watch whether the clockworks were fast or slow. The clock was correct. I therefore had nothing to adjust on the works. After that I closed both doors, and I spent the night again in my old hiding place. During this night no inspection of the hall by any person took place. After the hall doors were unlocked, which I could perceive by the unlocking noises, I left the hall on 8 November 1939 at about 6:30 a.m. through the side emergency exit by the kitchen. I went through Kellerstraße back into the interior of the city, drank two cups of coffee at the kiosk at Isartor, and then went to Türkenstraße to master carpenter Brög, from whom I wanted to take leave once more. This was about 8:00 in the morning. Since master carpenter Brög was not at home, I went to my former landlady Lehmann and asked there whether any post had come in for me. This was not the case. The purpose of my stay in Munich was not discussed. I also do not believe that I told her anything about my travel plans.

From Mrs. Lehmann I went directly to the main station in Munich, where I bought a third-class ticket for the route Munich–Ulm–Friedrichshafen–Konstanz. The journey cost approximately 11 RM. As far as Ulm I traveled by passenger train; from Ulm onward I used the express train. The departure from Munich had taken place at about 10:00. I made no acquaintances of any kind on that day either.

[Friedrichshafen and Konstanz (8 November 1939)]

At about 6:00 p.m. I arrived at the main station in Friedrichshafen. Until the departure of the connecting steamer to Konstanz I had three quarters of an hour's wait there. In the meantime I sought out a barber in order to be shaved there. From the main station I went to the right along the street and found, in the first or second cross street to the right, about 60 meters from the main street, a barber shop. I had myself shaved there. Since besides me there were several customers in the shop, I came out only after half an hour. From there I went directly back to the harbor station and continued by steamer to Konstanz.

Neither in the train nor on the steamer did I make travel acquaintances. Nor during my stay in Friedrichshafen did I meet acquaintances or speak with anyone.

At about 9:00 p.m. the steamer, which was delayed because of fog, arrived in Konstanz. Without taking any stay whatsoever, I wanted to cross the border into Switzerland by the most direct possible route.

In this connection I must mention, which I had not said earlier during my interrogation, that in autumn 1938, shortly after the decision to carry out the act, I had already once traveled from Königsbronn directly to Konstanz and back again to Königsbronn for the sole purpose of determining whether the border was more heavily occupied than in those years when I had lived in Konstanz. If I am asked whether I would have given up my intention or nevertheless carried out the act if I had found the border so heavily occupied that an illegal crossing appeared almost impossible to me, I cannot answer this question; that is, I do not know what I would then have done. In fact, however, I observed in autumn 1938 that the border was not more heavily occupied than in the years 1925 to 1930.

[Arrest at the Swiss Border]

On my flight I took the following route from the steamer landing place: Marktstätte, Rosgartenstraße, past the Dreifaltigkeitskirche to Bodanplatz, then further through Hüetlinstraße, Kreuzlinger Straße, Schwedenschanze, Wesenberggarten. I had no obstacles of any kind to overcome on this route. At the entrance from the Schwedenschanze into the Wesenberggarten I passed through a small garden gate, which however was not locked. When I was in this garden at the height of the Wesenberg house, I was called upon, then immediately stopped, and was then taken by an official, who first took everything from me that I had in my pockets, to an office room, where I was arrested.

If I am asked what my first thought was at that moment, I must admit that in the first moment I was annoyed at myself and my carelessness. I thought: if only I had not simply run straight at it, but had at least first looked around carefully before I went toward the border.

What my further thoughts were I really no longer know.

The ignition parts already mentioned, which I had in my pocket at the time of my arrest, were really there only by chance. I had once found them in Munich in the pocket of my blue work suit, where they apparently had still been without my knowledge since my employment in the Heidenheim armature factory. At that time I put these small parts into the pocket of my suit with the intention of throwing them away. On my last departure from Munich I still thought of throwing them into the Isar, but forgot this and then intended to throw them into Lake Constance. But there too I had forgotten it, and so they were still in my pocket.

The pliers found on me I had deliberately put on my person in order to be able to cut through any barbed-wire obstacles at the border.

Note:

Regarding the note sheets, reference is made to the statements already made. These statements were read to E. once more.

He states:

I recognize these statements, which have just been read to me, as correct today too.

The RFB badge that I wore pinned under the lapel of my jacket at the time of my arrest comes from the time of my membership in the RFB during my Konstanz period. Fiebig, who brought me into the RFB at that time, by the way, had already died before 1930. The badge was apparently among my old things since that time without my having seen it in the meantime. Only when clearing up in Munich did I find it again. If I am asked why I did not throw it away, I remember having thought: "You will pin it on out of old memory." Whether this was already shortly before 6 November or only on 8 November 1939 I no longer know definitely. It must actually have been in the last days before 6 November, since on 8 November 1939 I no longer had my things with me, apart from what I wanted to take across the border. I pursued no particular purpose with pinning on the badge, such as being better received in Switzerland.

Since my arrest until today I have not thought of escape. I considered it hopeless. I do admit, however, that in Munich in the cell I looked at the bars, but I had no serious thoughts of escape there either.

Nor have I had any thoughts of suicide up to today, and I have none at the moment either.

C) Attitude Toward the Deed

Question: "What did you think when, in the night of 7 to 8 November, you inspected your work for the last time and closed the doors?"

Answer: "I can no longer remember that."

Question: "How had you imagined the effects of the attack at that time?"

Answer: "I had already thought that over several times beforehand."

Question: "Did you think that a number of persons could be killed?"

Answer: "Yes."

Question: "Did you want that? And whom did you want to hit?"

Answer: "Yes. I wanted to hit the leadership."

Question: "Did this will remain in you during the whole execution or preparation of the deed, or did doubts about your course of action also come to you now and then?"

Answer: After long reflection. "I no longer know whether doubts ever came to me or not. But I believe that none came to me."

[Eight People Killed]

Question: "How do you stand today toward what you did, after you killed eight people even though your plan failed?"

Answer: "I would never do that again."

Reproach: "That is not an answer to my question."

Answer: "The purpose was not achieved."

Question: "Is it then indifferent to you whether you have brought eight people from life to death?"

Answer: "No, that is not indifferent to me."

Question: "What would you do if today you were released for some reason?"

Answer: "I would try to make good again what bad I have done."

Question: "By what means and how?"

Answer: "By trying to find my way into the national community and to cooperate."

Question: "Could you do that?"

Answer: "I have changed my intention."

Question: "Because you were arrested?"

Answer: "No, I firmly believe that my plan would have succeeded if my view had been correct. Since it did not succeed, I am convinced that it was not meant to succeed and that my view was wrong."

Read by myself, approved, and signed:

signed Georg Elser.

Closed:

signed Kappler. signed Schmidt. signed Seibold. Criminal Commissars.